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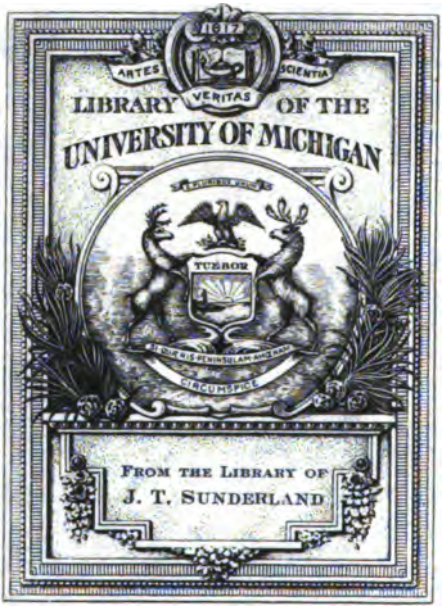


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Centenary Edition

# THE TRANSIENT AND PERMANENT IN CHRISTIANITY

# THE TRANSIENT AND PERMANENT IN CHRISTIANITY

BY

THEODORE PARKER

EDITED WITH NOTES

BY

GEORGE WILLIS COOKE

BOSTON
AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

A number of the earliest and latest, as well as several of the most significant, of Theodore Parker's sermons have been brought together in this volume. His South Boston sermon, which first brought him into prominence as an expounder of the new theology, gives title to the volume. It is followed by his epoch-making discourse on Jesus, at "the Great and Thursday Lecture." The earliest written of his sermons to secure the honor of print, that on the relations of the Bible to the soul, has never before been reprinted from the pages of the obscure magazine in which it appeared.

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Following these sermons are a number which were first printed in "The Dial," the famous organ of transcendentalism. Emerson said of them, that "some numbers had an instant exhausting sale, because of papers by Theodore Parker." Among these were the sermons on "The Pharisees," and "Primitive Christianity." His earliest critical article is his "Thoughts on Theology," in review of Dorner's book on Christ. His sermon on goodness also occupied a conspicuous place in his controversy with the religious leaders of his day.

Special occasions gave emphasis to his discourses on the use of Sunday, and the real meaning of revivals. The revival sermons, if severe, are sane and profoundly ethical. His first ordination sermon after that at South Boston gave opportunity for a more explicit interpretation of his later and wiser theology.

The volume closes with the last piece of writing he prepared for publication, in the form of a humorous

and satirical criticism of the teleological method in theology.

It cannot be claimed that Parker was at his soundest and best in any of the sermons and essays contained in this volume; but historically several of them are of the highest importance. They must be read and studied by anyone who would understand why he created so great a stir by his preaching, and why he had for many years the largest congregation which assembled in Boston.

Theodore Parker was a free thinker; but he was also deeply religious. His philosophy enabled him to trust greatly in God, to have bravest confidence in man's sublime destiny, but at the same time to scorn all tradition and all supernatural defences of religion. His confidence in the soul was without hesitation or doubt.

G. W. C.

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# I

## THE TRANSIENT AND PERMANENT IN CHRISTIANITY.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away."—Luke xxi, 33.

In this sentence we have a very clear indication that Jesus of Nazareth believed the religion he taught would be eternal, that the substance of it would last for ever. Yet there are some who are affrighted by the faintest rustle which a heretic makes among the dry leaves of theology; they tremble lest Christianity itself should perish without hope. Ever and anon the cry is raised, "The Philistines be upon us, and Christianity is in danger." The least doubt respecting the popular theology, or the existing machinery of the church; the least sign of distrust in the religion of the pulpit, or the religion of the street, is by some good men supposed to be at enmity with faith in Christ, and capable of shaking Christianity itself. On the other hand, a few bad men, and a few pious men, it is said, on both sides of the water, tell us the day of Christianity is past. The latter, it is alleged, would persuade us that, hereafter, piety must take a new form, the teachings of Jesus are to be passed by, that religion is to wing her way sublime, above the flight of Christianity, far away, toward heaven, as the fledged eaglet leaves for ever the nest which sheltered his callow youth. Let us, therefore, devote a few moments to this subject, and consider what is *transient* in Christianity, and what

is *permanent* therein. The topic seems not inappropriate to the times in which we live, or the occasion that calls us together.

Christ says his word shall never pass away. Yet, at first sight, nothing seems more fleeting than a word. It is an evanescent impulse of the most fickle element. It leaves no track where it went through the air. Yet to this, and this only, did Jesus intrust the truth wherewith he came laden to the earth; truth for the salvation of the world. He took no pains to perpetuate his thoughts: they were poured forth where occasion found him an audience — by the side of the lake, or a well; in a cottage, or the temple; in a fisherman's boat, or the synagogue of the Jews. He founds no institution as a monument of his words. He appoints no order of men to preserve his bright and glad relations. He only bids his friends give freely the truth they had freely received. He did not even write his words in a book. With a noble confidence, the result of his abiding faith, he scattered them broadcast on the world, leaving the seed to its own vitality. He knew that what is of God cannot fail, for God keeps his own. He sowed his seed in the heart, and left it there, to be watered and warmed by the dew and the sun which heaven sends. He felt his words were for eternity. So he trusted them to the uncertain air; and for eighteen hundred years that faithful element has held them good — distinct as when first warm from his lips. Now they are translated into every human speech, and murmured in all earth's thousand tongues, from the pine forests of the north to the palm groves of eastern Ind. They mingle, as it were, with the roar of a populous city, and join the

chime of the desert sea. Of a Sabbath morn they are repeated from church to church, from isle to isle, and land to land, till their music goes round the world. These words have become the breath of the good, the hope of the wise, the joy of the pious, and that for many millions of hearts. They are the prayers of our churches, our better devotions by fireside and fieldside; the enchantment of our hearts. It is these words that still work wonders, to which the first recorded miracles were nothing in grandeur and utility. It is these which build our temples and beautify our homes. They raise our thoughts of sublimity; they purify our ideal of purity; they hallow our prayer for truth and love. They make beauteous and divine the life which plain men lead. They give wings to our aspirations. What charmers they are! Sorrow is lulled at their bidding. They take the sting out of disease, and rob adversity of his power to disappoint. They give health and wings to the pious soul, broken-hearted and shipwrecked in his voyage through life, and encourage him to tempt the perilous way once more. They make all things ours: Christ our brother; time our servant; death our ally, and the witness of our triumph. They reveal to us the presence of God, which else we might not have seen so clearly, in the first wind-flower of spring, in the falling of a sparrow, in the distress of a nation, in the sorrow or the rapture of the world. Silence the voice of Christianity, and the world is well-nigh dumb, for gone is that sweet music which kept in awe the rulers of the people, which cheers the poor widow in her lonely toil, and comes like light through the windows of morning, to men who sit stooping and feeble, with failing eyes and a hungering heart. It is gone — all gone! only the cold, bleak world left before them.

Such is the life of these words; such the empire they have won for themselves over men's minds since they were spoken first. In the meantime, the words of great men and mighty, whose name shook whole continents, though graven in metal and stone, though stamped in institutions, and defended by whole tribes of priests and troops of followers — their words have gone to the ground, and the world gives back no echo of their voice. Meanwhile, the great works, also, of old times — castle, and tower, and town, their cities and their empires, have perished, and left scarce a mark on the bosom of the earth to show they once have been. The philosophy of the wise, the art of the accomplished, the song of the poet, the ritual of the priest, though honored as divine in their day, have gone down a prey to oblivion. Silence has closed over them; only their spectres now haunt the earth. A deluge of blood has swept over the nations; a night of darkness, more deep than the fabled darkness of Egypt, has lowered down upon that flood, to destroy or to hide what the deluge had spared. But through all this the words of Christianity have come down to us from the lips of that Hebrew youth, gentle and beautiful as the light of a star, not spent by their journey through time and through space. They have built up a new civilization, which the wisest gentile never hoped for, which the most pious Hebrew never foretold. Through centuries of wasting these words have flown on, like a dove in the storm, and now wait to descend on hearts pure and earnest, as the Father's spirit, we are told, came down on his lowly Son. The old heavens and the old earth are indeed passed away, but the word stands. Nothing shows clearer than this how fleeting is what man calls great, how lasting what God pronounces true.

Looking at the word of Jesus, at real Christianity, the pure religion he taught, nothing appears more fixed and certain. Its influence widens as light extends; it deepens as the nations grow more wise. But looking at the history of what men call Christianity, nothing seems more uncertain and perishable. While true religion is always the same thing, in each century and every land, in each man that feels it, the Christianity of the pulpit, which is the religion taught, the Christianity of the people, which is the religion that is accepted and lived out, has never been the same thing in any two centuries or lands, except only in name. The difference between what is called Christianity by the Unitarians in our times, and that of some ages past, is greater than the difference between Mahomet and the Messiah. The difference at this day between opposing classes of Christians, the difference between the Christianity of some sects, and that of Christ himself, is deeper and more vital than that between Jesus and Plato, pagan as we call him. The Christianity of the seventh century has passed away. We recognize only the ghost of superstition in its faded features, as it comes up at our call. It is one of the things which has been, and can be no more, for neither God nor the world goes back. Its terrors do not frighten, nor its hopes allure us. We rejoice that it has gone. But how do we know that our Christianity will not share the same fate? Is there that difference between the nineteenth century, and some seventeen that have gone before it since Jesus, to warrant the belief that our notion of Christianity shall last for ever? The stream of time has already beat down philosophies and theologies, temple and church, though never so old and revered. How do we know there is not a perishing ele-

ment in what we call Christianity? Jesus tells us *his* word is the word of God, and so shall never pass away. But who tells us that *our* word shall never pass away? that *our notion* of his word shall stand for ever?

Let us look at this matter a little more closely. In actual Christianity — that is, in that portion of Christianity which is preached and believed — there seems to have been, ever since the time of its earthly founder, two elements, the one transient, the other permanent. The one is the thought, the folly, the uncertain wisdom, the theological notions, the impiety of man; the other, the eternal truth of God. These two bear, perhaps, the same relation to each other that the phenomena of outward nature, such as sunshine and cloud, growth, decay, and reproduction, bear to the great law of nature, which underlies and supports them all. As in that case more attention is commonly paid to the particular phenomena than to the general law, so in this case more is generally given to the transient in Christianity than to the permanent therein.

It must be confessed, though with sorrow, that transient things form a great part of what is commonly taught as religion. An undue place has often been assigned to forms and doctrines, while too little stress has been laid on the divine life of the soul, love to God and love to man. Religious forms may be useful and beautiful. They are so, whenever they speak to the soul, and answer a want thereof. In our present state some forms are perhaps necessary. But they are only the accident of Christianity, not its substance. They are the robe, not the angel, who may take another robe quite as becoming and useful. One sect has many forms; another, none. Yet both may be equally

Christian, in spite of the redundance or the deficiency. They are a part of the language in which religion speaks, and exist, with few exceptions, wherever man is found. In our calculating nation, in our rationalizing sect, we have retained but two of the rites so numerous in the early Christian Church, and even these we have attenuated to the last degree, leaving them little more than a spectre of the ancient form. Another age may continue or forsake both; may revive old forms, or invent new ones to suit the altered circumstances of the times, and yet be Christians quite as good as we, or our fathers of the dark ages. Whether the Apostles designed these rites to be perpetual, seems a question which belongs to scholars and antiquarians; not to us, as Christian men and women. So long as they satisfy or help the pious heart, so long they are good. Looking behind or around us, we see that the forms and rites of the Christians are quite as fluctuating as those of the heathens, from whom some of them have been, not unwisely, adopted by the earlier church.

Again, the doctrines that have been connected with Christianity, and taught in its name, are quite as changeable as the form. This also takes place unavoidably. If observations be made upon nature, which must take place so long as man has senses and understanding, there will be a philosophy of nature, and philosophical doctrines. These will differ as the observations are just or inaccurate, and as the deductions from observed facts are true or false. Hence there will be different schools of natural philosophy so long as men have eyes and understandings of different clearness and strength. And if men observe and reflect upon religion — which will be done so long as

man is a religious and reflective being — there must also be a philosophy of religion, a theology and theological doctrines. These will differ, as men have felt much or little of religion, as they analyze their sentiments correctly or otherwise, and as they have reasoned right or wrong. Now the true system of nature, which exists in the outward facts, whether discovered or not, is always the same thing, though the philosophy of nature, which men invent, change every month, and be one thing at London and the opposite at Berlin. Thus there is but one system of nature as it exists in fact, though many theories of nature, which exist in our imperfect notions of that system, and by which we may approximate and at length reach it. Now there can be but one religion which is absolutely true, existing in the facts of human nature and the ideas of Infinite God. That, whether acknowledged or not, is always the same thing, and never changes. So far as a man has any real religion — either the principle or the sentiment thereof — so far he has that, by whatever name he may call it. For, strictly speaking, there is but one kind of religion, as there is but one kind of love, though the manifestations of this religion, in forms, doctrines, and life, be never so diverse. It is through these men approximate to the true expression of this religion. Now, while this religion is one and always the same thing, there may be numerous systems of theology or philosophies of religion. These, with their creeds, confessions, and collections of doctrines, deduced by reasoning upon the facts observed, may be baseless and false, either because the observation was too narrow in extent, or otherwise defective in point of accuracy, or because the reasoning was illogical, and therefore the deduction spurious. Each of

these three faults is conspicuous in the systems of theology. Now, the solar system as it exists in fact is permanent, though the notions of Thales and Ptolemy, of Copernicus and Descartes, about this system, prove transient, imperfect approximations to the true expression. So the Christianity of Jesus is permanent, though what passes for Christianity with popes and catechisms, with sects and churches, in the first century or in the nineteenth century, prove transient also. Now it has sometimes happened that a man took his philosophy of nature at second-hand, and then attempted to make his observations conform to his theory, and nature ride in his panniers. Thus some philosophers refused to look at the moon through Galileo's telescope, for, according to their theory of vision, such an instrument would not aid the sight. Thus their preconceived notions stood up between them and nature. Now it has often happened that men took their theology thus at second-hand, and distorted the history of the world and man's nature besides, to make religion conform to their notions. Their theology stood between them and God. Those obstinate philosophers have disciples in no small number.

What another has said of false systems of science will apply equally to the popular theology: "It is barren in effects, fruitful in questions, slow and languid in its improvement, exhibiting in its generality the counterfeit of perfection, but ill filled up in its details, popular in its choice, but suspected by its very promoters, and therefore bolstered up and countenanced with artifices. Even those who have been determined to try for themselves, to add their support to learning, and to enlarge its limits, have not dared entirely to desert received opinions, nor to seek the spring-head of

things. But they think they have done a great thing if they intersperse and contribute something of their own; prudently considering, that by their assent they can save their modesty, and by their contributions, their liberty. Neither is there, nor ever will be, an end or limit to these things. One snatches at one thing, another is pleased with another; there is no dry nor clear sight of anything. Every one plays the philosopher out of the small treasures of his own fancy; the more sublime wits more acutely and with better success; the duller with less success but equal obstinacy; and, by the discipline of some learned men, sciences are bounded within the limits of some certain authors which they have set down, imposing them upon old men and instilling them into young. So that now (as Tully cavilled upon Cæsar's consulship) the star Lyra riseth by an edict, and authority is taken for truth, and not truth for authority; which kind of order and discipline is very convenient for our present use, but banisheth those which are better."

Any one who traces the history of what is called Christianity, will see that nothing changes more from age to age than the doctrines taught as Christian, and insisted on as essential to Christianity and personal salvation. What is falsehood in one province passes for truth in another. The heresy of one age is the orthodox belief and "only infallible rule" of the next. Now Arius, and now Athanasius, is lord of the ascendant. Both were excommunicated in their turn, each for affirming what the other denied. Men are burned for professing what men are burned for denying. For centuries the doctrines of the Christians were no better, to say the least, than those of their contem-

porary pagans. The theological doctrines derived from our fathers seem to have come from Judaism, heathenism, and the caprice of philosophers, far more than they have come from the principle and sentiment of Christianity. The doctrine of the trinity, the very Achilles of theological dogmas, belongs to philosophy and not religion; its subtleties cannot even be expressed in our tongue. As old religions became superannuated, and died out, they left to the rising faith, as to a residuary legatee, their forms and their doctrines; or rather, as the giant in the fable left his poisoned garment to work the overthrow of his conqueror. Many tenets that pass current in our theology seem to be the refuse of idol temples, the offscourings of Jewish and heathen cities, rather than the sands of virgin gold, which the stream of Christianity has worn off from the rock of ages, and brought in its bosom for us. It is wood, hay, and stubble, wherewith men have built on the corner-stone Christ laid. What wonder the fabric is in peril when tried by fire? The stream of Christianity, as men receive it, has caught a stain from every soil it has filtered through, so that now it is not the pure water from the well of life which is offered to our lips, but streams troubled and polluted by man with mire and dirt. If Paul and Jesus could read our books of theological doctrines, would they accept as their teaching what men have vented in their name? Never till the letters of Paul had faded out of his memory; never till the words of Jesus had been torn out from the book of life. It is their notions about Christianity men have taught as the only living word of God. They have piled their own rubbish against the temple of truth where piety comes up to worship; what wonder the pile seems un-

shapely and like to fall? But these theological doctrines are fleeting as the leaves on the trees. They —

> "are found
> Now green in youth, now withered on the ground:
> Another race the following spring supplies;
> They fall successive, and successive rise."

Like the clouds of the sky, they are here to-day; tomorrow, all swept off and vanished, while Christianity itself, like the heaven above, with its sun, and moon, and uncounted stars, is always over our head, though the cloud sometimes debars us of the needed light. It must of necessity be the case that our reasonings, and therefore our theological doctrines, are imperfect, and so perishing. It is only gradually that we approach to the true system of nature by observation and reasoning, and work out our philosophy and theology by the toil of the brain. But meantime, if we are faithful, the great truths of morality and religion, the deep sentiment of love to man and love to God, are perceived intuitively, and by instinct, as it were, though our theology be imperfect and miserable. The theological notions of Abraham, to take the story as it stands, were exceedingly gross, yet a greater than Abraham has told us Abraham desired to see my day, saw it, and was glad. Since these notions are so fleeting, why need we accept the commandment of men as the doctrine of God?

This transitoriness of doctrines appears in many instances, of which two may be selected for a more attentive consideration. First, the doctrine respecting the origin and authority of the Old and New Testament. There has been a time when men were burned for asserting doctrines of natural philosophy which

rested on evidence the most incontestable, because those doctrines conflicted with sentences in the Old Testament. " Every word of that Jewish record was regarded as miraculously inspired, and therefore as infallibly true. It was believed that the Christian religion itself rested thereon, and must stand or fall with the immaculate Hebrew text. He was deemed no small sinner who found mistakes in the manuscripts. On the authority of the written word man was taught to believe impossible legends, conflicting assertions; to take fiction for fact, a dream for a miraculous revelation of God, an oriental poem for a grave history of miraculous events, a collection of amatory idyls for a serious discourse " touching the mutual love of Christ and the church;" they have been taught to accept a picture sketched by some glowing eastern imagination, never intended to be taken for a reality, as a proof that the Infinite God spoke in human words, appeared in the shape of a cloud, a flaming bush, or a man who ate, and drank, and vanished into smoke; that he gave counsels to-day, and the opposite to-morrow; that he violated his own laws, was angry, and was only dissuaded by a mortal man from destroying at once a whole nation — millions of men who rebelled against their leader in a moment of anguish. Questions in philosophy, questions in the Christian religion, have been settled by an appeal to that book. The inspiration of its authors has been assumed as infallible. Every fact in the early Jewish history has been taken as a type of some analogous fact in Christian history. The most distant events, even such as are still in the arms of time, were supposed to be clearly foreseen and foretold by pious Hebrews several centuries before Christ. It is assumed at the outset, with no shadow of evidence,

that those writers held a miraculous communication with God, such as he has granted to no other man. What was originally a presumption of bigoted Jews became an article of faith, which Christians were burned for not believing. This has been for centuries the general opinion of the Christian church, both Catholic and Protestant, though the former never accepted the Bible as the *only* source of religious truth. It has been so. Still worse, it is now the general opinion of religious sects of this day. Hence the attempt, which always fails, to reconcile the philosophy of our times with the poems in Genesis writ a thousand years before Christ. Hence the attempt to conceal the contradictions in the record itself. Matters have come to such a pass that even now he is deemed an infidel, if not by implication an atheist, whose reverence for the Most High forbids him to believe that God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son, a thought at which the flesh creeps with horror; to believe it solely on the authority of an oriental story, written down nobody knows when or by whom, or for what purpose; which may be a poem, but cannot be the record of a fact, unless God is the author of confusion and a lie."

Now, this idolatry of the Old Testament has not always existed. Jesus says that none born of a woman is greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than John. Paul tells us the law — the very crown of the old Hebrew revelation — is a shadow of good things, which have now come; only a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; and when faith has come, that we are no longer under the schoolmaster; that it was a law of sin and death, from which we are made free by the law of the spirit of life. Christian teachers themselves have differed so widely in

their notion of the doctrines and meaning of those books, that it makes one weep to think of the follies deduced therefrom. But modern criticism is fast breaking to pieces this idol which men have made out of the scriptures. It has shown that here are the most different works thrown together; that their authors, wise as they sometimes were, pious as we feel often their spirit to have been, had only that inspiration which is common to other men equally pious and wise; that they were by no means infallible, but were mistaken in facts or in reasoning — uttered predictions which time has not fulfilled; men who in some measure partook of the darkness and limited notions of their age, and were not always above its mistakes or its corruptions.

The history of opinions on the New Testament is quite similar. It has been assumed at the outset, it would seem with no sufficient reason, without the smallest pretence on its writers' part, that all of its authors were infallibly and miraculously inspired, so that they could commit no error of doctrine or fact. Men have been bid to close their eyes at the obvious difference between Luke and John — the serious disagreement between Paul and Peter; to believe, on the smallest evidence, accounts which shock the moral sense and revolt the reason, and tend to place Jesus in the same series with Hercules, and Apollonius of Tyana; accounts which Paul in the Epistles never mentions, though he also had a vein of the miraculous running quite through him. Men have been told that all these things must be taken as part of Christianity, and if they accepted the religion, they must take all these accessories along with it; that the living spirit could not be had without the killing letter. All the books which caprice or ac-

cident had brought together between the lids of the Bible were declared to be the infallible word of God, the only certain rule of religious faith and practice. Thus the Bible was made not a single channel, but the *only* certain rule of religious faith and practice. To disbelieve any of its statements, or even the common interpretation put upon those statements by the particular age or church in which the man belonged, was held to be infidelity, if not atheism. In the name of him who forbid us to judge our brother, good men and pious men have applied these terms to others, good and pious as themselves. That state of things has by no means passed away. Men, who cry down the absurdities of paganism in the worst spirit of the French "free-thinkers," call others infidels and atheists, who point out, though reverently, other absurdities which men have piled upon Christianity. So the world goes. An idolatrous regard for the imperfect scripture of God's word is the apple of Atalanta, which defeats theologians running for the hand of divine truth.

But the current notions respecting the infallible inspiration of the Bible have no foundation in the Bible itself. Which evangelist, which apostle of the New Testament, what prophet or psalmist of the Old Testament, ever claims infallible authority for himself or for others? Which of them does not in his own writings show that he was finite, and, with all his zeal and piety, possessed but a limited inspiration, the bound whereof we can sometimes discover? Did Christ ever demand that men should assent to the doctrines of the Old Testament, credit its stories, and take its poems for histories, and believe equally two accounts that contradict one another? Has he ever told you that all the truths of his religion, all the beauty of a Chris-

tian life, should be contained in the writings of those men who, even after his resurrection, expected him to be a Jewish king; of men who were sometimes at variance with one another, and misunderstood his divine teachings? Would not those modest writers themselves be confounded at the idolatry we pay them? Opinions may change on these points, as they have often changed — changed greatly and for the worse since the days of Paul. They are changing now, and we may hope for the better; for God makes man's folly as well as his wrath to praise him, and continually brings good out of evil.

Another instance of the transitoriness of doctrines taught as Christian is found in those which relate to the nature and authority of Christ. One ancient party has told us that he is the infinite God; another, that he is both God and man; a third, that he was a man, the son of Joseph and Mary — born as we are, tempted like ourselves, inspired, as we may be, if we will pay the price. Each of the former parties believed its doctrine on this head was infallibly true, and formed the very substance of Christianity, and was one of the essential conditions of salvation, though scarce any two distinguished teachers, of ancient or modern times, agree in their expression of this truth.

Almost every sect that has ever been makes Christianity rest on the personal authority of Jesus, and not the immutable truth of the doctrines themselves, or the authority of God, who sent him into the world. Yet it seems difficult to conceive any reason why moral and religious truths should rest for their support on the personal authority of their revealer, any more than the truths of science on that of him who makes them

known first or most clearly. It is hard to see why the great truths of Christianity rest on the personal authority of Jesus, more than the axioms of geometry rest on the personal authority of Euclid or Archimedes. The authority of Jesus, as of all teachers, one would naturally think, must rest on the truth of his words, and not their truth on his authority.

Opinions respecting the nature of Christ seem to be constantly changing. In the three first centuries after Christ, it appears, great latitude of speculation prevailed. Some said he was God, with nothing of human nature, his body only an illusion; others, that he was man, with nothing of the divine nature, his miraculous birth having no foundation in fact. In a few centuries it was decreed by councils that he was God, thus honoring the divine element; next, that he was man also, thus admitting the human side. For some ages the Catholic church seems to have dwelt chiefly on the divine nature that was in him, leaving the human element to mystics and other heretical persons, whose bodies served to flesh the swords of orthodox believers. The stream of Christianity has come to us in two channels — one within the church, the other without the church — and it is not hazarding too much to say, that since the fourth century the true Christian life has been out of the established church, and not in it, but rather in the ranks of dissenters. From the Reformation till the latter part of the last century, we are told, the Protestant church dwelt chiefly on the human side of Christ, and since that time many works have been written to show how the two — perfect deity and perfect manhood — were united in his character. But, all this time, scarce any two eminent teachers agree on these points, however orthodox they may be called.

What a difference between the Christ of John Gerson and John Calvin — yet were both accepted teachers and pious men. What a difference between the Christ of the Unitarians and the Methodists — yet may men of both sects be true Christians and acceptable with God. What a difference between the Christ of Matthew and John — yet both were disciples, and their influence is wide as Christendom and deep as the heart of man. But on this there is not time to enlarge.

Now it seems clear, that the notion men form about the origin and nature of the scriptures, respecting the nature and authority of Christ, have nothing to do with Christianity except as its aids or its adversaries; they are not the foundation of its truths. These are theological questions, not religious questions. Their connection with Christianity appears accidental: for if Jesus had taught at Athens, and not at Jerusalem; if he had wrought no miracle, and none but the human nature had ever been ascribed to him; if the Old Testament had for ever perished at his birth, Christianity would still have been the word of God; it would have lost none of its truths. It would be just as true, just as beautiful, just as lasting, as now it is; though we should have lost so many a blessed word, and the work of Christianity itself would have been, perhaps, a long time retarded.

To judge the future by the past, the former authority of the Old Testament can never return. Its present authority cannot stand. It must be taken for what it is worth. The occasional folly and impiety of its authors must pass for no more than their value; while the religion, the wisdom, the love, which make fragrant its leaves, will still speak to the best hearts

as hitherto, and in accents even more divine when reason is allowed her rights. The ancient belief in the infallible inspiration of each sentence of the New Testament is fast changing, very fast. One writer, not a sceptic, but a Christian of unquestioned piety, sweeps off the beginning of Matthew; another, of a different church and equally religious, the end of John. Numerous critics strike off several epistles. The Apocalypse itself is not spared, notwithstanding its concluding curse. Who shall tell us the work of retrenchment is to stop here; that others will not demonstrate, what some pious hearts have long felt, that errors of doctrine and errors of fact may be found in many parts of the record, here and there, from the beginning of Matthew to the end of Acts? We see how opinions have changed ever since the apostles' time; and who shall assure us that they were not sometimes mistaken in historical, as well as doctrinal matters; did not sometimes confound the actual with the imaginary; and that the fancy of these pious writers never stood in the place of their recollection?

But what if this should take place? Is Christianity then to perish out of the heart of the nations, and vanish from the memory of the world, like the religions that were before Abraham? It must be so, if it rest on a foundation which a scoffer may shake, and a score of pious critics shake down. But this is the foundation of a theology, not of Christianity. That does not rest on the decision of councils. It is not to stand or fall with the infallible inspiration of a few Jewish fishermen, who have writ their names in characters of light all over the world. It does not continue to stand through the forbearance of some critic, who can cut, when he will, the thread on which its life depends.

Christianity does not rest on the infallible authority of the New Testament. It depends on this collection of books for the historical statement of its facts. In this we do not require infallible inspiration on the part of the writers, more than in the record of other historical facts. To me it seems as presumptuous, on the one hand, for the believer to claim this evidence for the truth of Christianity, as it is absurd, on the other hand, for the sceptic to demand such evidence to support these historical statements. I cannot see that it depends on the personal authority of Jesus. He was the organ through which the infinite spoke. It is God that was manifested in the flesh by him, on whom rests the truth which Jesus brought to light, and made clear and beautiful in his life; and if Christianity be true, it seems useless to look for any other authority to uphold it, as for some one to support Almighty God. So if it could be proved — as it cannot — in opposition to the greatest amount of historical evidence ever collected on any similar point, that the gospels were the fabrication of designing and artful men, that Jesus of Nazareth had never lived, still Christianity would stand firm, and fear no evil. None of the doctrines of that religion would fall to the ground; for, if true, they stand by themselves. But we should lose — oh, irreparable loss! — the example of that character, so beautiful, so divine, that no human genius could have conceived it, as none, after all the progress and refinement of eighteen centuries, seems fully to have comprehended its lustrous life. If Christianity were true, we should still think it was so, not because its record was written by infallible pens, nor because it was lived out by an infallible teacher; but that it is true, like the axioms of geometry, because it is true, and is to be tried by

the oracle God places in the breast. If it rest on the personal authority of Jesus alone, then there is no certainty of its truth if he were ever mistaken in the smallest matter, as some Christians have thought he was in predicting his second coming.

These doctrines respecting the scriptures have often changed, and are but fleeting. Yet men lay much stress on them. Some cling to these notions as if they were Christianity itself. It is about these and similar points that theological battles are fought from age to age. "Men sometimes use worst the choicest treasure which God bestows. This is especially true of the use men make of the Bible. Some men have regarded it as the heathen their idol, or the savage his fetish. They have subordinated reason, conscience, and religion to this. Thus have they lost half the treasure it bears in its bosom. No doubt the time will come when its true character shall be felt. Then it will be seen, that, amid all the contradictions of the Old Testament — its legends, so beautiful as fictions, so appalling as facts; amid its predictions that have never been fulfilled; amid the puerile conceptions of God, which sometimes occur, and the cruel denunciations that disfigure both psalm and prophecy, there is a reverence for man's nature, a sublime trust in God, and a depth of piety, rarely felt in these cold northern hearts of ours. Then the devotion of its authors, the loftiness of their aim, and the majesty of their life, will appear doubly fair, and prophet and psalmist will warm our hearts as never before. Their voice will cheer the young, and sanctify the grey-headed; will charm us in the toil of life, and sweeten the cup death gives us when he comes to shake off this mantle of flesh. Then will it be seen that the

words of Jesus are the music of heaven, sung in an earthly voice, and the echo of these words in John and Paul owe their efficacy to their truth and their depth, and to no accidental matter connected therewith. Then can the word, which was in the beginning and now is, find access to the innermost heart of man, and speak there as now it seldom speaks. Then shall the Bible — which is a whole library of the deepest and most earnest thoughts and feelings, and piety and love, ever recorded in human speech — be read oftener than ever before, not with superstitition, but with reason, conscience, and faith fully active. Then shall it sustain men bowed down with many sorrows; rebuke sin, encourage virtue, sow the world broadcast and quick with the seed of love, that man may reap a harvest for life everlasting."

With all the obstacles men have thrown in its path, how much has the Bible done for mankind! No abuse has deprived us of all its blessings! You trace its path across the world from the day of Pentecost to this day. "As a river springs up in the heart of a sandy continent, having its father in the skies, and its birthplace in distant, unknown mountains; as the stream rolls on, enlarging itself, making in that arid waste a belt of verdure wherever it turns its way; creating palm groves and fertile plains, where the smoke of the cottager curls up at eventide, and marble cities send the gleam of their splendor far into the sky; such has been the course of the Bible on the earth." Despite of idolaters bowing to the dust before it, it has made a deeper mark on the world than the rich and beautiful literature of all the heathen. The first book of the Old Testament tells man he is made in the image of God; the first of the New Testament gives us the

motto, Be perfect as your Father in heaven. Higher words were never spoken. How the truths of the Bible have blessed us! There is not a boy on all the hills of New England; not a girl born in the filthiest cellar which disgraces a capital in Europe, and cries to God against the barbarism of modern civilization; not a boy nor a girl all Christendom through — but their lot is made better by that great book.

Doubtless the time will come when men shall see Christ also as he is. Well might he still say, "Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me?" No! we have made him an idol, have bowed the knee before him, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" called him "Lord, Lord!" but done not the things which he said. The history of the Christian world might well be summed up in one word of the evangelist —"and there they crucified him;" for there has never been an age when men did not crucify the Son of God afresh. But if error prevail for a time and grow old in the world, truth will triumph at the last, and then we shall see the Son of God as he is. Lifted up, he shall draw all nations unto him. Then will men understand the word of Jesus, which shall not pass away. Then we shall see and love the divine life that he lived. How vast has his influence been! How his spirit wrought in the hearts of his disciples, rude, selfish, bigoted, as at first they were! How it has wrought in the world! His words judge the nations. The wisest son of man has not measured their height. They speak to what is deepest in profound men, what is holiest in good men, what is divinest in religious men. They kindle anew the flame of devotion in hearts long cold. They are spirit and life. His truth was not

derived from Moses and Solomon; but the light of God shown through him, not colored, not bent aside. His life is the perpetual rebuke of all time since. It condemns ancient civilization; it condemns modern civilization. Wise men we have since had, and good men; but this Galilean youth strode before the world whole thousands of years, so much of divinity was in him. His words solve the questions of this present age. In him the godlike and the human met and embraced, and a divine life was born. Measure him by the world's greatest sons — how poor they are! Try him by the best of men — how little and low they appear! Exalt him as much as we may, we shall yet, perhaps, come short of the work. But still was he not our brother; the son of man, as we are; the Son of God, like ourselves? His excellence — was it not human excellence? His wisdom, love, piety — sweet and celestial as they were — are they not what we also may attain? In him, as in a mirror, we may see the image of God, and go on from glory to glory, till we are changed into the same image, led by the spirit which enlightens the humble. Viewed in this way, how beautiful is the life of Jesus! Heaven has come down to earth, or, rather, earth has become heaven. The Son of God, come of age, has taken possession of his birthright. The brightest revelation is this — of what is possible for all men, if not now, at least hereafter. How pure is his spirit, and how encouraging its words! "Lowly sufferer," he seems to say, "see how I bore the cross. Patient laborer, be strong; see how I toiled for the unthankful and the merciless. Mistaken sinner, see of what thou art capable. Rise up, and be blessed."

But if, as some early Christians began to do, you take a heathen view, and make him a god, the Son of

God in a peculiar and exclusive sense, much of the significance of his character is gone. His virtue has no merit, his love no feeling, his cross no burden, his agony no pain. His death is an illusion, his resurrection but a show. For if he were not a man, but a god, what are all these things? what his words, his life, his excellence of achievement? It is all nothing, weighed against the illimitable greatness of him who created the worlds and fills up all time and space! Then his resignation is no lesson, his life no model, his death no triumph to you or me, who are not gods, but mortal men, that know not what a day shall bring forth, and walk by faith "dim sounding on our perilous way." Alas! we have despaired of man, and so cut off his brightest hope.

In respect of doctrines as well as forms, we see all is transitory. "Everywhere is instability and insecurity." Opinions have changed most on points deemed most vital. Could we bring up a Christian teacher of any age — from the sixth to the fourteenth century, for example, though a teacher of undoubted soundness of faith, whose word filled the churches of Christendom — clergymen would scarce allow him to kneel at their altar, or sit down with them at the Lord's table. . His notions of Christianity could not be expressed in our forms, nor could our notions be made intelligible to his ears. The questions of his age, those on which Christianity was thought to depend — questions which perplexed and divided the subtle doctors — are no questions to us. The quarrels which then drove wise men mad, now only excite a smile or a tear, as we are disposed to laugh or weep at the frailty of man. We have other straws of our

own to quarrel for. Their ancient books of devotion do not speak to us; their theology is a vain word. To look back but a short period, the theological speculations of our fathers during the last two centuries, their "practical divinity," even the sermons written by genius and piety, are, with rare exceptions, found unreadable; such a change is there in the doctrines.

Now, who shall tell us that the change is to stop here; that this sect or that, or even all sects united, have exhausted the river of life, and received it all in their canonized urns, so that we need draw no more out of the eternal well, but get refreshment nearer at hand? Who shall tell us that another age will not smile at our doctrines, disputes, and unchristian quarrels about Christianity, and make wide the mouth at men who walked brave in orthodox raiment, delighting to blacken the name of heretics, and repeat again the old charge, "He hath blasphemed?" Who shall tell us they will not weep at the folly of all such as fancied truth shone only in the contracted nook of their school, or sect, or coterie? Men of other times may look down equally on the heresy-hunters, and men hunted for heresy, and wonder at both. The men of all ages before us were quite as confident as we that their opinion was truth, and their notion was Christianity and the whole thereof. The men who lit the fires of persecution, from the first martyr to Christian bigotry down to the last murder of innocents, had no doubt their opinion was divine. The contest about transubstantiation, and the immaculate purity of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the scriptures, was waged with a bitterness unequalled in these days. The Protestant smiles at one, the Catholic at the other, and

men of sense wonder at both. It might teach us all a lesson, at least of forbearance. No doubt an age will come in which ours shall be reckoned a period of darkness — like the sixth century — when men groped for the wall, but stumbled and fell, because they trusted a transient notion, not an eternal truth; an age when temples were full of idols set up by human folly; an age in which Christian light had scarce begun to shine into men's hearts. But while this change goes on, while one generation of opinions passes away, and another rises up, Christianity itself, that pure religion which exists eternal in the constitution of the soul and the mind of God, is always the same. The word that was before Abraham, in the very beginning, will not change, for that word is truth. From this Jesus subtracted nothing; to this he added nothing. But he came to reveal it as the secret of God, that cunning men could not understand, but which filled the souls of men meek and lowly of heart. This truth we owe to God; the revelation thereof to Jesus, our elder brother, God's chosen son.

To turn away from the disputes of the Catholics and the Protestants, of the Unitarian and the Trinitarian, of old school and new school, and come to the plain words of Jesus of Nazareth, Christianity is a simple thing, very simple. It is absolute, pure morality; absolute, pure religion; the love of man; the love of God acting without let or hindrance. The only creed it lays down is the great truth which springs up spontaneous in the holy heart — there is a God. Its watchword is, Be perfect as your Father in heaven. The only form it demands is a divine life;

doing the best thing in the best way, from the highest motives; perfect obedience to the great law of God. Its sanction is the voice of God in your heart; the perpetual presence of him who made us and the stars over our head; Christ and the Father abiding within us. All this is very simple — a little child can understand it; very beautiful — the loftiest mind can find nothing so lovely. Try it by reason, conscience, and faith — things highest in man's nature — we see no redundance, we feel no deficiency. Examine the particular duties it enjoins — humility, reverence, sobriety, gentleness, charity, forgiveness, fortitude, resignation, faith, and active love; try the whole extent of Christianity, so well summed up in the command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind — thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;" and is there anything therein that can perish? No, the very opponents of Christianity have rarely found fault with the teachings of Jesus. The end of Christianity seems to be to make all men one with God as Christ was one with him; to bring them to such a state of obedience and goodness that we shall think divine thoughts and feel divine sentiments, and so keep the law of God by living a life of truth and love. Its means are purity and prayer; getting strength from God, and using it for our fellow-men as well as ourselves. It allows perfect freedom. It does not demand all men to *think* alike, but to think uprightly, and get as near as possible at truth; not all men to *live* alike, but to live holy, and get as near as possible to a life perfectly divine. Christ set up no pillars of Hercules, beyond which men must not sail the sea in quest of truth. He says, "I have

many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. . . Greater works than these shall ye do." Christianity lays no rude hand on the sacred peculiarity of the individual genius and character. But there is no Christian sect which does not fetter a man. It would make all men think alike, or smother their conviction in silence. Were all men Quakers or Catholics, Unitarians or Baptists, there would be much less diversity of thought, character, and life, less of truth active in the world, than now. But Christianity gives us the largest liberty of the sons of God; and were all men Christians after the fashion of Jesus, this variety would be a thousand times greater than now: for Christianity is not a system of doctrines, but rather a method of attaining oneness with God. It demands, therefore, a good life of piety within, of purity without, and gives the promise that whoso does God's will shall know of God's doctrine.

In an age of corruption, as all ages are, Jesus stood and looked up to God. There was nothing between him and the Father of all; no old world, be it of Moses or Esaias, of a living rabbi, or sanhedrim of rabbis; no sin or perverseness of the finite will. As the result of this virgin purity of soul and perfect obedience, the light of God shone down into the very depths of his soul, bringing all of the Godhead which flesh can receive. He would have us do the same; worship with nothing between us and God; act, think, feel, live, in perfect obedience to him; and we never are *Christians* as he was the *Christ*, until we worship, as Jesus did, with no mediator, with nothing between us and the Father of all. He felt that God's word was in him; that he was one with God. He told what

he saw, the truth; he lived what he felt, a life of love. The truth he brought to light must have been always the same before the eyes of all-seeing God, nineteen centuries before Christ, or nineteen centuries after him. A life supported by the principle and quickened by the sentiment of religion, if true to both, is always the same thing in Nazareth or New England. Now that divine man received these truths from God, was illumined more clearly by "the light that lighteneth every man," combined or involved all the truths of religion and morality in his doctrine, and made them manifest in his life. Then his words and example passed into the world, and can no more perish than the stars be wiped out of the sky. The truths he taught; his doctrines respecting man and God; the relation between man and man, and man and God, with the duties that grow out of that relation — are always the same, and can never change till man ceases to be man, and creation vanishes into nothing. No; forms and opinions change and perish, but the word of God cannot fail. The form religion takes, the doctrines wherewith she is girded, can never be the same in any two centuries or two men; for since the sum of religious doctrines is both the result and the measure of a man's total growth in wisdom, virtue, and piety, and since men will always differ in these respects, so religious *doctrines* and *forms* will always differ, always be transient, as Christianity goes forth and scatters the seed she bears in her hand. But the *Christianity holy men feel in the heart*, the Christ that is born within us, is always the same thing to each soul that feels it. This differs only in degree, and not in kind, from age to age, and man to man. There is something in Christianity which no sect, from

the "Ebionites" to the "Latter-Day Saints," ever entirely overlooked. This is that common Christianity which burns in the hearts of pious men.

Real Christianity gives men new life. It is the growth and perfect action of the holy spirit God puts into the sons of men. It makes us outgrow any form or any system of doctrines we have devised, and approach still closer to the truth. It would lead us to take what help we can find. It would make the Bible our servant, not our master. It would teach us to profit by the wisdom and piety of David and Solomon, but not to sin their sins, nor bow to their idols. It would make us revere the holy words spoken by "godly men of old," but revere still more the word of God spoken through conscience, reason, and faith, as the holiest of all. It would not make Christ the despot of the soul, but the brother of all men. It would not tell us that even he had exhausted the fulness of God, so that he could create none greater; for with him "all things are possible," and neither Old Testament nor New Testament ever hints that creation exhausts the creator. Still less would it tell us the wisdom, the piety, the love, the manly excellence of Jesus was the result of miraculous agency alone, but that it was won, like the excellence of humbler men, by faithful obedience to him who gave his son such ample heritage. It would point to him as our brother, who went before, like the good shepherd, to charm us with the music of his words, and with the beauty of his life to tempt us up the steeps of mortal toil, within the gate of heaven. It would have us make the kingdom of God on earth, and enter more fittingly the kingdom on high. It would lead us to form Christ in the heart. on which

Paul laid such stress, and work out our salvation by this. For it is not so much by the Christ who lived so blameless and beautiful eighteen centuries ago that we are saved directly, but by the Christ we form in our hearts and live out in our daily life, that we save ourselves, God working with us both to will and to do.

Compare the simpleness of Christianity, as Christ sets it forth on the mount, with what is sometimes taught and accepted in that honored name; and what a difference! One is of God; one is of man. There is something in Christianity which sects have not reached; something that will not be won, we fear, by theological battles, or the quarrels of pious men; still we may rejoice that Christ is preached in any way. The Christianity of sects, of the pulpit, of society, is ephemeral — a transitory fly. It will pass off and be forgot. Some new form will take its place, suited to the aspect of the changing times. Each will represent something of truth, but no one the whole. It seems the whole race of man is needed to do justice to the whole of truth, as "the whole church to preach the whole gospel." Truth is intrusted for the time to a perishable ark of human contrivance. Though often shipwrecked, she always comes safe to land, and is not changed by her mishap. That pure ideal religion which Jesus saw on the mount of his vision, and lived out in the lowly life of a Galilean peasant; which transforms his cross into an emblem of all that is holiest on earth; which makes sacred the ground he trod, and is dearest to the best of men, most true to what is truest in them — cannot pass away. Let men improve never so far in civilization, or soar never

so high on the wings of religion and love, they can never outgo the flight of truth and Christianity. It will always be above them. It is as if we were to fly towards a star, which becomes larger and more bright the nearer we approach, till we enter and are absorbed in its glory.

If we look carelessly on the ages that have gone by, or only on the surfaces of things as they come up before us, there is reason to fear; for we confound the truth of God with the word of man. So at a distance the cloud and the mountain seem the same. When the drift changes with the passing wind an unpracticed eye might fancy the mountain itself was gone. But the mountain stands to catch the clouds, to win the blessing they bear, and send it down to moisten the fainting violet, to form streams which gladden valley and meadow, and sweep on at last to the sea in deep channels, laden with fleets. Thus the forms of the church, the creeds of the sects, the conflicting opinions of teachers, float round the sides of the Christian mount, and swell and toss, and rise and fall, and dart their lightning, and roll their thunder, but they neither make nor mar the mount itself. Its lofty summit far transcends the tumult, knows nothing of the storm which roars below, but burns with rosy light at evening and at morn, gleams in the splendors of the mid-day sun, sees his light when the long shadows creep over plain and moorland, and all night long has its head in the heavens, and is visited by troops of stars which never set, nor veil their faces so pure and high.

Let then the transient pass, fleet as it will; and may God send us some new manifestation of the Christian

faith, that shall stir men's hearts as they were never stirred; some new word, which shall teach us what we are, and renew us all in the image of God; some better life, that shall fulfil the Hebrew prophecy, and pour out the spirit of God on young men and maidens, and old men and children; which shall realize the word of Christ, and give us the Comforter, who shall reveal all needed things! There are Simeons enough in the cottages and churches of New England, plain men and pious women, who wait for the consolation, and would die in gladness if their expiring breath could stir quicker the wings that bear him on. There are men enough, sick and "bowed down, in no wise able to lift up themselves," who would be healed could they kiss the hand of their Savior, or touch but the hem of his garment; men who look up and are not fed, because they ask bread from heaven and water from the rock, not traditions or fancies, Jewish or heathen, or new or old; men enough who, with throbbing hearts, pray for the spirit of healing to come upon the waters, which other than angels have long kept in trouble; men enough who have lain long time sick of theology, nothing bettered by many physicians, and are now dead, too dead to bury their dead, who would come out of their graves at the glad tidings. God send us a real religious life, which shall pluck blindness out of the heart, and make us better fathers, mothers, and children! a religious life, that shall go with us where we go, and make every home the house of God, every act acceptable as a prayer. We would work for this, and pray for it, though we wept tears of blood while we prayed.

Such, then, is the transient and such the permanent in Christianity. What is of absolute value never

changes; we may cling round it and grow to it for ever. No one can say his notions shall stand. But we may all say, the truth as it is in Jesus shall never pass away. Yet there are always some, even religious men, who do not see the permanent element, so they rely on the fleeting, and, what is also an evil, condemn others for not doing the same. They mistake a defence of the truth for an attack upon the holy of holies, the removal of a theological error for the destruction of all religion. Already men of the same sect eye one another with suspicion, and lowering brows that indicate a storm, and, like children who have fallen out in their play, call hard names. Now, as always, there is a collision between these two elements. The question puts itself to each man, "Will you cling to what is perishing, or embrace what is eternal?" This question each must answer for himself.

My friends, if you receive the notions about Christianity which chance to be current in your sect or church, solely because they are current, and thus accept the commandment of men instead of God's truth, there will always be enough to commend you for soundness of judgment, prudence, and good sense, enough to call you Christian for that reason. But if this is all you rely upon, alas for you! The ground will shake under your feet if you attempt to walk uprightly and like men. You will be afraid of every new opinion, lest it shake down your church; you will fear "lest, if a fox go up, he will break down your stone wall." The smallest contradiction in the New Testament or Old Testament, the least disagreement between the law and the gospel, any mistake of the apostles, will weaken your faith. It shall be

with you "as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty."

If, on the other hand, you take the true word of God, and live out this, nothing shall harm you. Men may mock, but their own mouthfuls of wind shall be blown back upon their own face. If the master of the house were called Beelzebub, it matters little what name is given to the household. The name Christian, given in mockery, will last till the world go down. He that loves God and man, and lives in accordance with that love, needs not fear what man can do to him. His religion comes to him in his hour of sadness, it lays its hand on him when he has fallen among thieves, and raises him up, heals and comforts him. If he is crucified, he shall rise again.

My friends, you this day receive, with the usual formalities, the man you have chosen to speak to you on the highest of all themes — what concerns your life on earth, your life in heaven. It is a work for which no talents, no prayerful diligence, no piety, is too great; an office that would dignify angels, if worthily filled. If the eyes of this man be holden, that he *cannot* discern between the perishing and the true, you will hold him guiltless of all sin in this; but look for light where it can be had, for his office will then be of no use to you. But if he sees the truth, and is scared by worldly motives, and *will* not tell it, alas for him! If the watchman see the foe coming, and blow not the trumpet, the blood of the innocent is on him.

Your own conduct and character, the treatment you offer this young man, will in some measure influence him. The hearer affects the speaker. There were

some places where even Jesus "did not many mighty works, because of their unbelief." Worldly motives — not seeming such — sometimes deter good men from their duty. Gold and ease have, before now, enervated noble minds. Daily contact with men of low aims takes down the ideal of life, which a bright spirit casts out of itself. "Terror has sometimes palsied tongues that, before, were eloquent as the voice of persuasion. But thereby truth is not holden. She speaks in a thousand tongues, and with a pen of iron graves her sentence on the rock forever. You may prevent the freedom of speech in this pulpit if you will. You may hire your servants to preach as you bid; to spare your vices, and flatter your follies; to prophesy smooth things, and say, It is peace, when there is no peace. Yet in so doing you weaken and enthral yourselves." And alas for that man who consents to think one thing in his closet and preach another in his pulpit! God shall judge him in his mercy, not man in his wrath. But over his study and over his pulpit might be writ, EMPTINESS; on his canonical robes, on his forehead and right hand, DECEIT, DECEIT.

But, on the other hand, you may encourage your brother to tell the truth. Your affection will then be precious to him, your prayers of great price. Every evidence of your sympathy will go to baptize him anew to holiness and truth. You will then have his best words, his brightest thoughts, and his most hearty prayers. He may grow old in your service, blessing and blest. He will have —

> "The sweetest, best of consolation,
> The thought that he has given,

To serve the cause of Heaven,
The freshness of his early inspiration."

Choose as you will choose; but weal or woe depends upon your choice.

## II

## THE RELATION OF JESUS TO HIS AGE

**Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him?**
**JOHN vii, 48.**

In all the world there is nothing so remarkable as a great man; nothing so rare; nothing which so well repays study. Human nature is loyal at its heart, and is, always and everywhere, looking for this its true earthly sovereign. We sometimes say that our institutions, here in America, do not require a great man; that we get along better without than with such. But let a real, great man light on our quarter of the planet; let us understand him, and straightway these democratic hearts of ours burn with admiration and with love. We wave in his words, like corn in the harvest wind. We should rejoice to obey him, for he would speak what we need to hear. Men are always half expecting such a man. But when he comes, the real, great man that God has been preparing, men are disappointed; they do not recognize him. He does not enter the city through the gates which expectants had crowded. He is a fresh fact, brand new; not exactly like any former fact. Therefore men do not recognize nor acknowledge him. His language is strange, and his form unusual. He looks revolutionary, and pulls down ancient walls to build his own temple, or at least, splits old rocks asunder, and quarries anew fresh granite and marble.

There are two classes of great men. Now and then some arise whom all acknowledge to be great, soon as

they appear. Such men have what is true in relation to the wants and expectations of to-day. They say what many men have wished but had not words for; they translate into thoughts what, as a dim sentiment, lay burning in many a heart, but could not get entirely written out into consciousness. These men find a welcome. Nobody misunderstands them. The world follows at their chariot-wheels, and flings up its cap and shouts its huzzas,— for the world is loyal, and follows its king when it sees and knows him. The good part of the world follows the highest man it comprehends; the bad, whoever serves its turn.

But there is another class of men so great that all cannot see their greatness. They are in advance of men's conjectures, higher than their dreams; too good to be actual, think some. Therefore, say many, there must be some mistake; this man is not so great as he seems; nay, he is no great man at all, but an impostor. These men have what is true not merely in relation to the wants and expectations of men here and to-day; but what is true in relation to the universe, to eternity, to God. They do not speak what you and I have been trying to say, and cannot; but what we shall one day, years hence, wish to say, after we have improved and grown up to man's estate.

Now it seems to me, the men of this latter class, when they come, can never meet the approbation of the censors and guides of public opinion. Such as wished for a new great man had a superstition of the last one in their minds. They expected the new to be just like the old, but he is altogether unlike. Nature is rich, but not rich enough to waste anything. So there are never two great men very strongly similar. Nay, this new great man, perhaps, begins by de-

stroying much that the old one built up with tears and prayers. He shows, at first, the limitations and defects of the former great man; calls in question his authority. He refuses all masters; bows not to tradition; and with seeming irreverence, laughs in the fact of the popular idols. How will the "respectable men," the men of a few good rules and those derived from their fathers, "the best of men and the wisest,"— how will they regard this new great man? They will see nothing remarkable in him except that he is fluent and superficial, dangerous and revolutionary. He disturbs their notions of order; he shows that the institutions of society are not perfect, that their imperfections are not of granite or marble, but only of words written on soft wax, which may be erased and others written thereon anew. He shows that such imperfect institutions are less than one great man. The guides and censors of public opinion will not honor such a man, they will hate him. Why not? Some others not half so well bred, nor well furnished with precedents, welcome the new great man; welcome his ideas; welcome his person. They say, "Behold a Prophet."

When Jesus, the son of Mary, a poor woman, wife of Joseph the carpenter, in the little town of Nazareth, when he "began to be about thirty years old," and began also to open his mouth in the synagogues and the highways nobody thought him a great man at all, as it seems. "Who are you?" said the guardians of public opinion. He found men expecting a great man. This, it seems, was the common opinion, that a great man was to arise, and save the church, and save the state. They looked back to

Moses, a divine man of antiquity, whose great life had passed into the world, and to whom men had done honor in various ways; amongst others, by telling all sorts of wonders he wrought, and declaring that none could be so great again, none get so near to God. They looked back also to the prophets, a long line of divine men, so they reckoned, but less than the awful Moses; his stature was far above the nation, who hid themselves in his shadow. Now the well-instructed children of Abraham thought the next great man must be only a copy of the last, repeat his ideas, and work in the old fashion. Sick men like to be healed by the medicine which helped them the last time; at least, by the customary drugs which are popular.

In Judea, there were then parties of men, distinctly marked. There were the conservatives — they represented the church, tradition, ecclesiastical or theocratical authority. They adhered to the words of the old books, the forms of the old rites, the tradition of the elders. "Nobody but a Jew can be saved," said they; "he only by circumcision, and the keeping of the old formal law; God likes that, he accepts nothing else." These were the Pharisees, with their servants the scribes. Of this class were the priests and the Levites in the main, the national party, the native-Hebrew party of that time. They had tradition, Moses and the prophets; they believed in tradition, Moses and the prophets, at least in public; what they believed in private God knew, and so did they. I know nothing of that.

Then there was the indifferent party; the Sadducees, the state. They had wealth, and they believed in it, both in public and private too. They had a more

generous and extensive cultivation than the Pharisees. They had intercourse with foreigners, and understood the writers of Ionia and Athens which the Pharisee held in abhorrence. These were sleek, respectable men, who, in part, disbelieved the Jewish theology. It is no very great merit to disbelieve even in the devil, unless you have a positive faith in God to take up your affections. The Sadducee believed neither in angel nor resurrection, not at all in the immortality of the soul. He believed in the state, in the laws, the constables, the prisons, and the axe. In religious matters, it seems the Pharisee had a positive belief, only it was a positive belief in a great mistake. In religious matters the Sadducee had no positive belief at all, not even in an error; at least, some think so. His distinctive affirmation was but a denial. He believed what he saw with his eyes, touched with his fingers, tasted with his tongue. He never saw, felt, nor tasted immortal life; he had no belief therein. There was once a heathen Sadducee who said, "My right arm is my God!"

There was likewise a party of come-outers. They despaired of the state and the church too, and turned off into the wilderness, "where the wild asses quench their thirst," building up their organizations free, as they hoped, from all ancient tyrannies. The Bible says nothing directly of these men in its canonical books. It is a curious omission; but two Jews, each acquainted with foreign writers, Josephus and Philo, give an account of these. These were the Essenes, an ascetic sect, hostile to marriage, at least many of them, who lived in a sort of association by themselves, and had all things in common.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees had no great

living and ruling ideas; none I mean which represented man, his hopes, wishes, affections, his aspirations, and power of progress. That is no very rare case, perhaps, you will say, for a party in the church or the state to have no such ideas; but they had not even a plausible substitute for such ideas. They semed to have no faith in man, in his divine nature, his power of improvement. The Essenes had ideas, had a positive belief; had faith in man, but it was weakened in a great measure by their machinery. They, like the Pharisees and the Sadducees, were imprisoned in their organization, and probably saw no good out of their own party lines.

It is a plain thing that no one of these three parties would accept, acknowledge, or even perceive the greatness of Jesus of Nazareth. His ideas were not their notions. He was not the man they were looking for; not at all the Messiah, the annointed one of God, which they wanted. The Sadducee expected no new great man unless it was a Roman quæstor or procurator; the Pharisees looked for a Pharisee stricter than Gamaliel; the Essenes for an ascetic. It is so now. Some seem to think that if Jesus were to come back to earth, he would preach Unitarian sermons, from a text out of the Bible, and prove his divine mission and the everlasting truths, the truths of necessity that he taught, in the Unitarian way, by telling of the miracles he wrought eighteen hundred years ago; that he would prove the immortality of the soul by the fact of his own corporeal resurrection. Others seem to think that he would deliver homilies of a severer character; would rate men roundly about total depravity, and tell of unconditional election, salvation without works, and

imputed righteousness, and talk of hell till the women and children fainted, and the knees of men smote together with trembling. Perhaps both would be mistaken.

So it was then. All these three classes of men, imprisoned in their prejudices and superstitions, were hostile. The Pharisees said, "We know that God spake unto Moses; but as for this fellow, we know not whence he is. He blasphemeth Moses and the prophets; yea, he hath a devil, and is mad, why hear him?" The Sadducees complained that "he stirred up the people;" so he did. The Essenes, no doubt, would have it that he was "a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." Tried by these three standards, the judgment was true; what could he do to please these three parties? Nothing! nothing that he would do. So they hated him; all hated him, and sought to destroy him. The cause is plain. He was so deep they could not see his profoundness; too high for their comprehension; too far before them for their sympathy. He was not the great man of the day. He found all organizations against him, church and state. Even John the Baptist, a real prophet, but not the prophet, doubted if Jesus was the one to be followed. If Jesus had spoken for the Pharisees, they would have accepted his speech and the speaker too. Had he favored the Sadducees, he had been a great man in their camp, and Herod would gladly have poured wine for the eloquent Galilean, and have satisfied the carpenter's son with purple and fine linen. Had he praised the Essenes, uttering their shibboleth, they also would have paid him his price, have made him the head of their association perhaps, at least have

honored him in their way. He spoke for none of these. Why should they honor or even tolerate him? It were strange had they done so. Was it through any fault or deficiency of Jesus that these men refused him? Quite the reverse. The rain falls and the sun shines on the evil and the good; the work of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness is before all men, revealing the invisible things, yet the fool hath said, ay, said in his heart, "There is no God!"

Jesus spoke not for the prejudices of such, and therefore they rejected him. But as he spoke truths for man, truths from God, truths adapted to man's condition there, to man's condition everywhere and always, when the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes went away, their lips curling with scorn; when they gnashed on one another with their teeth, there were noble men and humble women who had long awaited the consolation of Israel, and they heard him, heard him gladly. Yes, they left all to follow him. Him! no, it was not him they followed; it was God in him they obeyed, the God of truth, the God of love.

There were men not counted in the organized sects; men weary of absurdities, thirsting for the truth, sick, they knew not why nor of what, yet none the less sick, and waiting for the angel who should heal them, though by troubled waters and remedies unknown. These men had not the prejudices of a straightly organized and narrow sect. Perhaps they had not its knowledge, or its good manners. They were "unlearned and ignorant men," those early followers of Christ. Nay, Jesus himself had no extraordinary culture, as the world judges of such things. His townsmen wondered, on a famous occasion, how he had learned to read. He knew little of theologies, it would seem;

the better for him, perhaps. No doubt the better for us that he insisted on none. He knew they were not religion. The men of Galilee did not need theology. The youngest scribe in the humblest theological school at Jerusalem, if such a thing were in those days, could have furnished theology enough to believe in a lifetime. They did need religion; they did see it as Jesus unfolded its loveliness; they did welcome it when they saw; welcome it in their hearts.

If I were a poet as some are born, and skilled to paint with words what shall stand out as real, to live before the eye, and then dwell in the affectionate memory for ever, I would tell of the audience which heard the sermon on the mount, which listened to the parables, the rebukes, the beautiful beatitudes. They were plain men, and humble women; many of them foolish like you and me; some of them sinners. But they all had hearts; had souls, all of them — hearts made to love, souls expectant of truth. When he spoke, some said, no doubt, "That is a new thing, that the true worshipper shall worship in spirit and in truth, as well here as in Jerusalem, now as well as any time; that also is a hard saying, love your enemies; forgive them, though seventy times seven they smite and offend you; that notion that the law and the prophets are contained, all that is essentially religious thereof, in one precept, love men as yourself and God with all your might. This differs a good deal from the Pharisaic orthodoxy of the synagogue. That is a bold thing, presumptuous and revolutionary to say, "I am greater than the temple, wiser than Solomon, a better symbol of God than both." But there was something deeper than Jewish orthodoxy in their hearts; something that Jewish orthodoxy could not satisfy,

and what was yet more troublesome to ecclesiastical guides, something that Jewish orthodoxy could not keep down, nor even cover up. Sinners were converted at his reproof. They felt he rebuked whom he loved. Yet his pictures of sin, and sinners too, were anything but flattering. There was small comfort in them. Still it was not the publicans and harlots who laid their hands on the place where their hearts should be, saying, "You hurt our feelings," and "we can't bear you!" Nay, they pondered his words, repenting in tears. He showed them their sin; its cause, its consequence, its cure. To them he came as a Savior, and they said, "Thou art well-come," those penitent Magdalenes weeping at his feet.

It would be curious could we know the mingled emotions that swayed the crowd which rolled up around Jesus, following him, as the tides obey the moon, wherever he went; curious to see how faces looked doubtful at first as he began to speak at Tabor or Gennesareth, Capernaum or Gischala, then how the countenance of some lowered and grew black with thunder suppressed but cherished, while the faces of others shone as a branch of stars seen through some disparted cloud in a night of fitful storms, a moment seen and then withdrawn. It were curious to see how gradually many discordant feelings, passion, prejudice, and pride were hushed before the tide of melodious religion he poured out around him, baptising anew saint and sinner, and old and young, into one brotherhood of a common soul, into one immortal service of the universal God; to see how this young Hebrew maid, deep-hearted, sensitive, enthusiastic, self-renouncing, intuitive of heavenly truth, rich as a young vine, with clustering affections just purpling into ripeness,— how she seized,

first and all at once, the fair ideal, and with generous bosom confidingly embraced it too; how that old man, gray-bearded, with baldness on his head, full of precepts and precedents, the lore of his fathers, the experience of a hard life, logical, slow, calculating, distrustful, remembering much and fearing much, but hoping a little, confiding only in the fixed, his reverence for the old deepening as he himself became of less use,— to see how he received the glad inspirations of the joiner's son, and wondering felt his youth steal slowly back upon his heart, reviving aspirations long ago forgot, and then the crimson tide of early hope come gushing, tingling on through every limb; to see how the young man halting between principle and passion, not yet petrified into worldliness, but struggling, uncertain, half reluctant, with those two serpents, custom and desire, that beautifully twined about his arms and breast and neck their wormy folds, concealing underneath their burnished scales the dragon's awful strength, the viper's poison fang, the poor youth caressing their snaky crests, and toying with their tongues of flame — to see how he slowly, reluctantly, amid great questionings of heart, drank in the words of truth, and then, obedient to the angel in his heart, shook off, as ropes of sand, that hideous coil, and trod the serpents underneath his feet. All this, it were curious, ay, instructive too, could we but see.

They heard him with welcome various as their life. The old men said, "It is Moses or Elias; it is Jeremiah, one of the old prophets arisen from the dead, for God makes none such, now-a-days, in the sterile dotage of mankind." The young men and maidens doubtless it was that said, "This is the Christ; the desire of the nations; the hope of the world, the great

new prophet; the Son of David; the Son of man; yes, the Son of God. He shall be our king." Human nature is loyal, and follows its king soon as it knows him. Poor lost sheep! the children of men look always for their guide, though so often they look in vain.

How he spoke, words deep and piercing; rebukes for the wicked, doubly rebuking, because felt to have come out from a great, deep, loving heart. His first word was, perhaps, "Repent," but with the assurance that the kingdom of God was here and now, within reach of all. How his doctrines, those great truths of nature, commended themselves to the heart of each, of all simple-souled men looking for the truth! He spoke out of his experience; of course into theirs. He spoke great doctrines, truths vast as the soul, eternal as God, winged with beauty from the loveliness of his own life. Had he spoken for the Jews alone his words had perished with that people; for that time barely the echo of his name had died away in his native hamlet; for the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, you and I had heard of him but as a rabbi; nay, had never been blest by him at all. Words for a nation, an age, a sect, are of use in their place, yet they soon come to nought. But as he spoke for eternity, his truths ride on the wings of time; as he spoke for man, they are welcome, beautiful and blessing, wherever man is found, and so must be till man and time shall cease.

He looked not back, as the Pharisee, save for illustrations and examples. He looked forward for his direction. He looked around for his work. There it lay, the harvest plenteous, the laborers few. It is always so. He looked not to men for his idea, his word to speak; as little for their applause. He looked in to God, for guidance, wisdom, strength, and as water

in the wilderness, at the stroke of Moses, in the Hebrew legend, so inspiration came at his call, a mighty stream of truth for the nation, faint, feeble, afraid, and wandering for the promised land; drink for the thirsty, and cleansing for the unclean.

But he met opposition; O, yes, enough of it. How could it be otherwise? It must be so. The very soul of peace, he brought a sword. His word was a consuming fire. The Pharisees wanted to be applauded, commended; to have their sect, their plans, their traditions praised and flattered. His word to them was "Repent;" of them, to the people, "Such righteousness admits no man to the kingdom of heaven; they are a deceitful prophecy, blind guides, hypocrites; not sons of Abraham, but children of the devil." They could not bear him; no wonder at it. He was the aggressor; had carried the war into the very heart of their system. They turned out of their company a man whose blindness he healed, because he confessed that fact. They made a law that all who believed on him should also be cast out. Well they might hate him, those old Pharisees. His existence was their reproach; his preaching their trial; his life with its outward goodness, his piety within, was their condemnation. The man was their ruin, and they knew it. The cunning can see their own danger, but it is only men wise in mind, or men simple of heart, that can see their real, permanent safety and defence; never the cunning; neither then, neither now.

Jesus looked to God for his truth, his great doctrines not his own, private, personal, depending on his idiosyncracies, and therefore only subjectively true,—but God's, universal, everlasting, the absolute religion. I do not know that he did not teach some errors also,

along with it. I care not if he did. It is by his truths that I know him, the absolute religion he taught and lived; by his highest sentiments that he is to be appreciated. He had faith in God and obeyed God; hence his inspiration, great, in proportion to the greater endowment, moral and religious, which God gave him, great likewise in proportion to his perfect obedience. He had faith in man none the less. Who ever yet had faith in God that had none in man? I know not. Surely no inspired prophet. As Jesus had faith in man, so he spoke to men. Never yet, in the wide world, did a prophet arise, appealing with a noble heart and a noble life to the soul of goodness in man, but that soul answered to the call. It was so most eminently with Jesus. The Scribes and Pharisees could not understand by what authority he taught. Poor Pharisees! how could they. His phylacteries were no broader than those of another man; nay, perhaps he had no phylacteries at all, nor even a broad-bordered garment. Men did not salute him in the market-place, sandals in hand, with their "Rabbi! Rabbi!" Could such men understand by what authority he taught? no more than they dared answer his questions. They that knew him felt he had authority quite other than that claimed by the Scribes; the authority of true words, the authority of a noble life; yes, authority which God gives a great moral and religious man. God delegates authority to men just in proportion to their power of truth, and their power of goodness; to their being and their life. So God spoke in Jesus, as he taught the perfect religion, anticipated, developed, but never yet transcended.

This then was the relation of Jesus to his age; the sectarians cursed him; cursed him by their gods; re-

jected him, abused him, persecuted him; sought his life. Yes, they condemned him in the name of God. All evil, says the proverb, begins in that name; much continues to claim it. The religionists, the sects, the sectarian leaders rejected him, condemned and slew him at the last, hanging his body on a tree. Poor priests of the people, they hoped thereby to stifle that awful soul! they only stilled the body; that soul spoke with a thousand tongues. So in the times of old when the Saturnian day began to dawn, it might be fabled that the old Titanic race, lovers of darkness and haters of the light, essayed to bar the rising morning from the world, and so heaped Pelion upon Ossa, and Olympus on Pelion; but first the day sent up his crimson flush upon the cloud, and then his saffron tinge, and next the sun came peering o'er the loftiest height, magnificently fair — and down the mountain's slanting ridge poured the intolerable day; meanwhile those triple hills, laboriously piled, came toppling, tumbling down, with lumbering crush, and underneath their ruin hid the helpless giants' grave. So was it with men who sat in Moses' seat. But this people, that "knew not the law," and were counted therefore accursed, they welcomed Jesus as they never welcomed the Pharisee, the Sadducee, or the Scribe. Ay, hence were their tears. The hierarchial fire burned not so bright contrasted with the sun. That people had a Simon Peter, a James, and a John, men not free from faults, no doubt, the record shows it, but with hearts in their bosoms, which could be kindled and then could light other hearts. Better still, there were Marthas and Marys among that people who "knew not the law" and were cursed. They were the mothers of many a church.

The character of Jesus has not changed, his doctrines are still the same; but what a change in his relation to the age, nay to the ages. The stone that the builders rejected is indeed become the head of the corner, and its foundation too. He is worshipped as a God. That is the rank assigned him by all but a fraction of the Christian world. It is no wonder. Good men worship the best thing they know, and call it God. What was taught to the mass of men, in those days, better than the character of Christ? Should they rather worship the Grecian Jove, or the Jehovah of the Jews? To me it seems the moral attainment of Jesus was above the hierarchical conception of God, as taught at Athens, Rome, Jerusalem. Jesus was the prince of peace, the king of truth, praying for his enemies —"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" The Jehovah of the Old Testament was awful and stern, a man of war, hating the wicked. The sacerdotal conception of God at Rome and Athens was lower yet. No wonder, then, that men soon learned to honor Jesus as a God, and then as God himself. Apostolical and other legends tell of his divine birth, his wondrous power that healed the sick, palsied and crippled, deaf and dumb and blind, created bread, turned water into wine, and bid obedient devils come and go; a power that raised the dead. They tell that nature felt with him, and at his death the strongly sympathizing sun paused at high noon, and for three hours withheld the day; that rocks were rent, and opening graves gave up their sainted dead, who trod once more the streets of Zion, the first-fruits of them that slept; they tell too how disappointed death gave back his prey, and spirit-like, Jesus restored, in flesh and shape the same, passed through the doors shut up,

and in a bodily form was taken up to heaven before the face of men! Believe men of these things as they will. To me they are not truth and fact, but mythic symbols and poetry; the psalm of praise with which the world's rude heart extols and magnifies its King. It is for his truth and his life, his wisdom, goodness, piety, that he is honored in my heart; yes, in the world's heart. It is for this that in his name are churches built, and prayers are prayed; for this that the best things we know, we honor with his name.

He is the greatest person of the ages, the proudest achievement of the human race. He taught the absolute religion, love to God and man. That God has yet greater men in store I doubt not; to say this is not to detract from the majestic character of Christ, but to affirm the omnipotence of God. When they come, the old contest will be renewed, the living prophet stoned, the dead one worshipped. Be that as it may, there are duties he teaches us far different from those most commonly taught. He was the greatest fact in the whole history of man. Had he conformed to what was told him of men; had he counseled only with flesh and blood, he had been nothing but a poor Jew — the world had lost that rich endowment of religious genius, that richest treasure of religious life, the glad tidings of the one religion, absolute and true. What if he had said, as others, "None can be greater than Moses, none so great?" He had been a dwarf; the spirit of God had faded from his soul! But he conferred with God, not men; took counsel of his hopes, not his fears. Working for men, with men, by men, trusting in God, and pure as truth, he was not scared at the little din of church or state, and trembled not, though Pilate and Herod were made friends only to crucify him that was

a born king of the world. Methinks I hear that lofty spirit say to you or me, Poor brother, fear not, nor despair. The goodness actual in me is possible for all. God is near thee now as then to me; rich as ever in truth, as able to create, as willing to inspire. Daily and nightly he showers down his infinitude of light. Open thine eyes to see, thy heart to live. Lo, God is here.

## III

## RELATION OF THE BIBLE TO THE SOUL

The value and importance of the Bible are generally acknowledged. We call it the book of books, the Holy Bible; the divine book, the book of life. We generally, at least in theory, regard it as differing from all other books that have been, are, or shall ever be, in respect to its origin, design and utility. Other books we refer to the free action of the human mind, this to a direct action of God's own spirit. Other books we take for what they seem to be worth. If they interest us we read them, if their doctrines appear reasonable we accept; if false or inadequate we reject them, never fancying we sin by using reason as the last standard whereby to measure their merits or defects. But with the Bible a different method is pursued; men read it as a duty, assent to its doctrines without understanding them, admit its binding authority, even when its precepts consist not with the universal sense of justice, but seem arbitrary. Thus attempts are made to justify some of the sanguinary laws of Moses, and the alleged command made to Abraham to sacrifice his son.

The Bible is honored above all other books. Men form societies, make great personal sacrifices — the poor servant girl contributing her hard earned shilling to circulate this book in other lands. It is in all hands. It is a well known friend in the poorest cottage. It is admitted to the proudest palace. It has a place in the pedlar's crowded pack, and cheers him when he

rests from his toil, and sits down dusty and faint upon his burden. It goes with the pilgrim who ventures untrod lands; beguiles his toil, comforts his sorrows, and kindles his hopes. Perhaps there is not a Christian bark afloat on the ocean that sails without a Bible.

Now this lofty place, this universal reception, is granted to no other book. None other speaks equally and with the same authority to the lofty and the low, the learned and the ignorant. None other can sanction an oath, solemnize a marriage, dry a mourner's tear or arm the soul for sadness, deepest affliction and death. Surely a book to which so lofty a place has been assigned must possess rare merits. What are they? What are the distinguishing features of this book, which give it precedence to all others? or rather, what is the relation of the Bible to the soul?

Before answering this latter question it may be well to determine what it is not.

The Bible is not the master of the soul. The disciples of Jesus were forbidden to be called masters. If they cannot bear that title, still less can their writings, some thousands of years after the writers are dead. The old prophets have still feebler claims to that distinction, for the very least in the new dispensation (the kingdom of heaven) is above the greatest of those men. Christianity acknowledges no master to the soul. God is its Father; the spirit of our faith is that of freedom, not bondage. Its chief apostle says, "Call no man your master;" still less can we call any book "master." However much we may venerate the scriptures of the Old Testament and New Testament, they are never to hold the soul in bondage. The artist is not to be crushed by his instruments, but is to apply them to their proper ends.

The Bible is not the foundation of religion. It is sometimes fancied religion is founded upon the Bible; it is said, if a man should disbelieve that book, he would of necessity cease to be religious. But religion is older than the Bible. Enoch walked with God without its support. Abraham and Moses and David and Isaiah and Solomon and Daniel knew nothing of it. Religion is not founded on the scriptures, more than the sense of justice is based on the "common law." The reverse of this is true, for the Bible is founded on the indestructible religious sentiment, as the "common law" rests on the sense of justice in the soul. Men sometimes think the statutes of the land were providentially struck out in some happy moment which will never return, that if these should perish, so would order and justice decease from being. They say the same of the Bible, and assert that morality and religion would have been quite lost from the world if the Bible had chanced to perish.

Still farther, the Bible or the New Testament is not the sole and exclusive foundation of Christianity, but simply its historical form. Christianity at this day does not rest merely on the New Testament. Its essential truths were before Abraham, when there was no Bible. It is the word that was in the very beginning, the true light which has always shone, enlightening every man, so far as he was enlightened at all; for all the true religious light of the world has only come from true religion, which is essentially the same with Christianity. Though it may differ in form, Christianity was ordained before the creation of the world, so that it is not simply "as old as the creation," but far older, ancient as the eternal ideas of justice, love, holiness, and truth. It is sometimes imagined, if the New Tes-

tament had been lost in the dark ages, that Christianity also would have ceased to be. But can this be true? Had this temple of Christianity been destroyed the spirit of Christianity could not have perished; for, granting it were shown, in opposition to the greatest amount of historical evidence ever brought to bear on the point, that the facts related in the Gospels were not facts but fictions; that Jesus never rose from the dead; never died, as it is related; never wrought miracles, taught doctrines or even lived — still Christianity would be as true, as lasting, as now it is, when environed by all these historical statements. It is true that Christianity is intimately connected with its Galilean founder, but not inseparably. Its truths are laid in human nature; they will live with the soul. They are the soul's law. Heaven and earth may pass away, but not one jot or tittle of Christianity can fail.

The Bible is not greater than conscience and reason. They are directly from God, God's voice heard plainly in the heart, as even on Horeb, or Sinai or the mount of transfiguration. Nothing can be superior to these instructors. The Bible may agree with reason, utter the same sentiments with conscience; and so far it will have authority. It can never contradict these counsellors, and yet claim obedience. What God has made cannot be unmade by any power short of his own; so nothing arbitrary or capricious can ever become binding on reason and conscience, let it be taught on what external authority it may. One chief merit of Christianity consists in restoring natural morality and natural religion to their original and proper place, in permitting conscience, reason and the religious sentiment to speak in their native, heavenly tones, and with their primitive authority. By thus restoring

natural religion, by thus appealing to those divine counsellors and prophets of eternity, it overthrows all arbitrary systems of religion which are not founded in the nature and reason of things; and puts to eternal silence all capricious advisers. Thus by fulfilling the true, the right, the good and the holy, it destroys all that is false, wrong, bad and profane.

Other religions have also their sacred books. The Hindoos have their Vedas and Puranas; Mahometans their Koran; sectarians their creed. These books are deemed by the foolish among their followers greater than the soul, superior to conscience, reason and the religious sentiment. They are appealed to as masters, the last standard of faith, are honored as the sole and exclusive foundation of these peculiar religious systems. They can only be the basis of a system that is not founded in the nature and reason of things. Faith in the peculiar institutions of such books, in the Vedas, Korans, and creeds, in any arbitrary system, is not freedom but bondage. It is not obedience to the universal "law of the spirit of life," but to some partial statute of man's device. It degrades man while it comforts him. It puts his better nature to a deadly sleep before it offers him relief from the present, or faith for the future. Such systems the apostle well calls the "Hagars shapen in ignorance, born into bondage with their children, which are to be driven out before the freeborn Isaac, and destined like Ishmael to have their hand against every man." Of the scriptures, then, it may be said, as it has been of the Sabbath: "The Bible was made for man, not man for the Bible."

But if the Bible is not a master of the soul, and is not superior to reason and conscience, it sustains the

relation of teacher. Yet it teaches in no formal method. It does not teach men by pouring certain abstract doctrines into all minds; still less is it by casting all souls anew in the same mould, destroying individual action and individual peculiarities. Nor does it instruct by cultivating merely a single faculty, while all the rest are left to sleep, and that is rendered preternaturally acute. Far different from this is the method of the New Testament. It teaches by arousing the soul, awakening all its noblest powers, and exciting them to free, earnest action, each in its own sphere. It reveals the true idea of a man, the divine man, man as he should be; tells him of his noble nature, the image of God. It sets before him the noblest aim, "Be perfect as God." It assures him that if with free spirit he contemplates the image of God reflected in Jesus, he shall be changed into the same image, informed by the same spirit, and pass from one stage of spiritual glory to another still higher. In this manner it seeks to renew the primitive likeness of God in the soul, to complete the man, to bring him to the fulness of Christ, making him one with God, so that he shall think God's thoughts, feel God's sentiments, and live God's will.

The New Testament is to us what the teacher is to the child. It reveals to us the truths we ourselves might, perhaps, discover at a more advanced stage of progress. Thus it anticipates experience, and gives us the truth at our first setting-out in life. A teacher can never do more than quicken the spirit, and hasten the time when the expanded soul shall act freely and right. The father leads his boy by the hand until he can walk alone; he would learn to walk without this aid, but at a later age.

Now it has ever been the office of great minds to instruct men of humbler powers. Some great genius rises up, and with his far-reaching eye sees what others do not dream of. He clothes his discourses in words that sound mysterious to the unwonted ear. Some few minds, only less than his own, accept of his teachings and hand them down to others less gifted than themselves, who in their turn communicate them to the multitude of men. Thus the truth which none but a genius could discover soon becomes the property of the wise and learned, next the common possession of all men. This takes place in all science and in every art. Those who make the great discoveries are looked on as inspired men, commissioned by the gods to make a revelation to the world. They are justly called inspired, for they are possessed with a large portion of the spirit that is in all men, enabling others to comprehend the new truth. So we find the men who invented the plough, the loom, the ship, and the letters of the alphabet, were regarded as gods; at least, as men inspired by the gods. Thus of old time the eloquent orator, the wise legislator, the prudent counsellor and the glowing poet, were called inspired men, the divinely appointed teachers of mankind. Their words were treasured as holy sayings, the very words of God. Such men, in part, were the writers of the Bible; not of that only, but of other books also, deemed holy by nations who knew not Christ, and never called the ineffable spirit by the Hebrew name, Jehovah. The spirit of God everywhere reveals itself; and though perhaps more clearly in the Old Testament than in any other witness of equal antiquity, yet God has not left himself without witness among any people. The Indian, the Persian, the Egyptian, and the Greek, had

each their sacred books, which were to them in a lower degree what the Hebrew scriptures were to the Jews. Let not this be taken as an idle assertion at random, for it is sanctioned by the high authority of Paul, who could quote Grecian writers acknowledging the paternal authority of God and the divine nature of man. The heathen, not less than the Hebrews, had the "schoolmaster to bring them to Christianity."

Now it happens that pupils outgrow their teachers. Since they start at their outset in life with all the results of their teachers' discoveries, if true to themselves, they will go beyond their old masters, think for themselves, and follow truth wherever she may lead. This takes place every day in the sciences and arts. One learns the art of sailing in a rude boat; another perfects this discovery by inventing a steamship. In these matters no man is afraid or ashamed to go farther than his teachers, though they were inspired men. The same may be said of laws and political institutions. Like old garments which were fine in their day, they are laid aside when their end is answered. No man wears them when worn out from respect to their maker. This event has befallen many portions of the Old Testament. The old Hebrew writers ran and were glorified; but now they depart and leave the race for other feet. Their errand is accomplished. But their writings, like the military bridges and trenches of the old Romans, still remain interesting objects to the pains-taking antiquary and diligent scholar. They still teach wisdom, inspire faith and quicken devotion. Moses was a great man, one of the greatest to whom the sun has ever lent light. He was a prophetic man; he looked far down into human nature, far onward into futurity. His laws were in part wise, won-

derful for his age; so they took a deep hold on the world, and have fixed their roots in every code that civilized men obey in the wide world. But it is only the true, the universal, the divine part of them that thus extends and still lives. All the peculiar institutions of his system, which belong to the man Moses, not to the divine idea of justice, holiness and love, have long since fallen to decay; the ruin has grown green with age, and is now tenanted with ignorance and superstition, which still linger about the tent of that great man, as owls and bats, who cannot bear the light, seek shelter in rotten trees and old forsaken buildings, which they leave at night-fall, to come out and mourn over the light of the world, wishing it would be always night, for their day is darkness, and their power vanishes as the gray morning dawns.

Moses has been the world's teacher; and, as has been said of Jesus, "his name has not been written, but ploughed into its history." Now we are not subject to his instructions; for we too are men, and have seen what he and Solomon desired to see and saw not. He was a worthy schoolmaster, and has fitted us for a better and higher instruction. Why appeal to his old text-books, as if they were the limit of human progress? His law was a "shadow of good things to come;" why grasp at the shadow when they have come, and we have embraced the substance? The Old Testament was the daybreak; but now the sun has risen, why should we still stumble in darkness, not knowing whither we go?

But if these instructions have done their will; if the Old Testament, which Paul considered imperfect and transitory, a law of sin and death, has been superseded; if the teacher of babes gave place to the

friend of man, how do we know that the New Testament, the gospel, nay, even Christianity itself, shall not one day be passed by and forgotten, having prepared the way for a more beautiful revelation of the divine image than Jesus himself? In heaven the angels need no Bible. How do we know the time will not come when man on earth shall not need the New Testament, having outgrown even that teacher also? The word is continually becoming dark; and shall we presume to say it can never assume a more perfect form, utter deeper truths, nor exert a mightier power to win and bless men, than in the man Christ Jesus? It is not for you and me to set limits to the infinite, and say to omnipotent wisdom, "Hither shalt thou come, but no farther." It is only impious superstition that dares foreshorten God, and say that there is for man no higher revelation than past times can bring, and that infinity is exhausted.

Doubtless there are men at this day who understand Christianity far better than it was understood by its teachers in the first ages of our era. Writings there are that display more of the beauty and power of Christianity than even the burning words of John and Paul. At that time Christianity was in its swaddling bands, laid in the manger; now it is, at least, in its cradle, but by no means fully grown. Man will doubtless go on, outgrowing his teachers; and Christianity a thousand years hence will be very different, and far more perfect than at this day. During the last ten centuries it has assumed very various forms, and even now the Christianity of Christ is well nigh lost amid the jar of the world, the subtleties of schools, and the idolatry of sects. These things are doubtless to perish in the using — God send them a speedy end;

but Christianity, in its essence, can never pass away. The gospel can never cease to be a teacher, for all its teachings are the laws of nature and of man. Their foundation is God's common law of the universe; of this "one jot or tittle shall in no wise fail." There is nothing in Christianity that can ever perish. Its idea of God, of man, of the relation between them; its doctrine of man's nature, duty, destination; of God's love, that broods like the day over beast and plant and man, its prophetic prayers for the kingdom of heaven on earth; its divine promises; its perfect ideal of human excellence, all these are immortal as thought, religion and God. They have always been in the world, shining, though more feebly and in darkness; and while a heart beats must ever be.

It is a striking fact, that during the eighteen hundred years Christianity has been proclaimed in the world, no one has found a defect or a fault in its doctrines, commands or promises. For eighteen hundred years its enemies have attacked it, exhausting all the weapons learning could furnish or wit devise. The philosopher and scoffer have wielded their arms against it, yet not the slightest feature of Christianity has been defaced in this warfare. For eighteen centuries the noblest souls born into the world of time have striven in their heavenward flight, in aspirations, meditations and prayer, yet even in fancy or the rapt hour of visionary enthusiasm have they never gone beyond the plain teachings and living character of that Galilean peasant. The religion he brought to light still stands, fresh as at first. No sign of decay is written on it, no mark of age appears; it lives an immortal youth. In the meantime the opinions, the laws, the philosophies of old time have fallen heavily to the

ground. New ones have arisen from century to century to supply their place, and live a brief day. Mankind has passed on. Thus the lights of old time, like the lamps in the street, are passed by, diminished by the distance, and gradually lost sight of, while high above us, like the eternal stars, whose positions and size vary not with the world's change of place, Christianity still shines with mild and tranquil light, and appears clearer and more lovely to man as he awakes more broadly from his dream, and is refined and elevated by the science and culture of successive ages. Art and science only enable him to see more clearly the beauty and the power of its teachings.

There are famous men in our times. How many will be famous ten years hence? Very few. How many names of popular writers (at this day in all mouths,) will have been heard of when a century has flown? Not one of a hundred; and when ten centuries have passed away scarce one writer will stick to the common heart. Society continually winnows the chaff from the wheat. In the furnace of time the dross of whole Alexandrian libraries is burned up, while the fine gold passes into the ages, and is current a thousand years hence as well as to-day. It knows nothing of time or space. To God's truth as to God a thousand years are as one day, and all space as a single spot. Now let it be considered that through eighteen hundred years of change, downfall, progress and retreat, war and peace, the shock of conflicting nations, the discovery of new worlds, the voice of Christianity has come down to us as soft and gentle, as powerful and persuasive, as when first it proclaimed glad tidings, and forced unwilling Pharisees to confess that voice divine. Its melody floats over every civilized land.

There is not a ploughman on the hills of New England, not a baby born in a garret of the dirtiest lane of the filthiest city in Europe, whose fate is not changed, and its destiny forecast and ameliorated thereby. How divine must be that voice which can thus penetrate so many centuries, be heard in so many lands, and welcomed by so many hearts! The same may be said of some portions of the Old Testament. Three thousand years that are past have not silenced the truths of Moses, David and Isaiah. Three thousand years that are yet to come will do no more. They stand like the exquisite statues and temples of old time, to be imitated, not surpassed; while the errors of these men must be forgotten.

God raises up prophetic men; they teach whole centuries. Their words are fresh a thousand years because they are so true. The error which clings to them is made vital by their truth; at least, all human error is separated from them, and the divine truth still lives. So it has been with Socrates, Homer, Moses, and Zoroaster. Such has been the history of a large portion of the Hebrew scriptures. Their influence has been mighty, sometimes disastrous, but often beneficent. Now the most remarkable of all these prophetic men was Jesus of Nazareth. He foresaw all; others since his time have been after-seen. His words were all truth, the words of everlasting life. This proves they were from God, and not man. So all in God's likeness will receive them. Since he speaks God's word, it is plain he is inspired by God's spirit; and so are all who utter such kindling truths.

Since these things are so, it is plain that Christ will always teach, his gospel be an eternal text-book. The form of Christianity will change to suit the char-

acter and wants of different nations and ages. Its old ordinances and symbols may pass away; the mythical and profane stories must be separated from the gospel, and the few foolish doctrines of the early teachers be severed from the inspiring truths of Jesus, which "are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever;" but the essence of Christianity can never change. God grant there may be new forms of religion, which shall take a deeper hold of the soul; that voices more like the true word shall speak to the spirit of man, arousing it from sloth, quickening its aspirations, and guiding its flight. Remnants of superstition, folly, Judaism, heathenism, and nameless abominations, still cling to every sect which claims the Christian name. It is the prayer of all devout hearts that these may soon cease, and living men, like Jesus, once more tempt forth new souls to a kindred life of truth and holiness and love. Viewed in this light, the New Testament is a teacher which the world can never outgrow. But yet, like other teachers, the Bible has sometimes been a tyrant. This is partly the fault of the pupils, partly of the book itself.

The Old Testament, with all its merits, is full of imperfections. They are degrading views of God and of man; duty is often made light of; and arbitrary institutions, that have no foundation in the nature of things, have been imposed upon man. The soul shudders at the awful and revolting character ascribed to the Jehovah of the Jews, a god jealous and revengeful, partial and unlovely. It shrinks at the odious institutions sanctioned by his name. Now some men have fancied they must take the whole Bible into their hearts and belief. Hence at this day men justify war, capital punishment, slavery, and other nameless sins,

by an appeal to the writings of Moses. Thereby is their sense of justice outraged; the voice of God in the soul is struck dumb before an old Hebrew tradition, and the soul itself enthralled. Some men at this day will thus adhere to the letter, while the spirit has long since gone. So orphan girls cling to the robes of their mother, dead and buried, fancying they hold her in their arms. Men honor the revelations made to Moses and Ezekiel, never dreaming that brighter revelations shall be made to their own souls, if they will be as faithful. They will tell you the canon of revelation is closed, that you and I, born in the decrepitude of mankind, inheriting only the dregs and ashes of humanity, must be poor imitators of two or three men, who have incarnated in past ages all of God's spirit that can be embodied in mortal flesh. They therefore will cling to the hem of truth's garments; nay, look wistfully on the waters long since colored by her majestic shade, as she swept over the world, but never take truth like a bride to their arms and their hearts. Such are idolators of the Bible; they shut their eyes when they read, yet hope to see visions. They close the gates of reason, and still expect wisdom. They keep traditions and care nothing for truth. How abortive is their effort! No wonder they think man incapable of truth, and God superannuated or deceased. Such men would see visions; they only dream dreams. "Ephraim is joined unto idols; let him alone."

These remarks apply not only to the Old Testament; some portions of the new covenant also have done the same. Paul and Peter and James and John saw not all things; nor were they placed above the reach of passion, human weakness, the dreams of that age, and

that imperfection of wisdom incidental to this mortal state. Yet the conflicting peculiarities of each of these writers, which no man can reconcile; and the errors they all agreed in, are forced equally upon us by teachers of doctrines. Even the simple Evangelists agree not entirely, and seem never to have drawn a sharp line between the fabulous and the historical. But the truth and fiction they offer us, mingled together, have been equally received as the words of everlasting life. We profess to know what they knew not. So it is not Paul of Tarsus, but we men of the nineteenth century whom "much learning hath made mad." All this is mournful to relate, still more melancholy to consider. Jesus is our friend; men have made him their master. His gospel makes us free by awaking reason, conscience and faith. Men have desecrated these powers, which are the image of God, and so become slaves. Christ gives us all things, and we glory in men.

But the Bible is not merely a teacher; it is a comforter also. The Old Testament has some crumbs of comfort for hungering souls. Though but a shadow of good things, it is still a shadow in the heat. Who in sorrow has ever read the appropriate Psalms without finding comfort? But it is to the gospel we look mainly for the comforter as for the teacher. This comforts us by the assurance that man is made for justice, goodness, holiness and truth; that he has infinite time before him to become perfect in. So, if a man looks back on years wasted in sleep, in riot, or in sin; if he looks around on imperfection, it is not with despair, but with faith; for what is not behind him is before him, and a future is better than a past. It assures him of his connection with God, a connection

so intimate that no good thought, feeling or wish is ever formed in vain. It tells him that God has so formed this scene of things, so watches over it, that no real evil can happen to a man; but every sorrow shall one day bear fruit of blessedness. It offers no delusions to comfort man by blinding the eye or hardening the heart into insensibility, but it looks through sorrow and suffering with an absolute trust in God, to serener peace and deepest tranquility. It teaches and comforts still more by example than through doctrines, precepts and exhortations. Man has always known what he should be, has felt what he is. The oldest poems are laments at his fall, and lyric prayers for better things. But, between the ideal we should be, and the actual we are, there has always been "a great gulf." No stoic nor epicurean could cross it. Now Christ filled up this chasm by living all the truths that he taught. So his life was a gospel, his death a revelation. The one teaches us to live in the body, the other to die to the flesh, that the soul may have more life.

Such, then, is the relation of the Bible to the soul. It is a teacher and comforter, not a master to whom man is to be subordinate. It teaches and comforts only so far as man is free, and faithful to himself. The old dispensation has passed away; it has little instruction, little comfort for us. But the Gospel will teach to the end of time, yet, be it remembered, this also came from the soul of man through the inspiration of God, which gives us all our knowledge: it has not exhausted the soul. It is one tree growing out of the earth, one drop out of the ocean, one ray from the boundless world of light. It is not the soul's master, but its servant. The soul is that likeness of God,

greater and better than its reflection, the gospel itself; for he who uttered its kindling truths, which now warm the world into love, and soften and refine it to holiness, deep and glowing though this inspiration was, did not exhaust its treasures and set limits to the progress of man. No one has ever so deeply reverenced the human soul as Christ. The scriptures, the great truth of his gospel, the nature of God, duty, and religion, already known, speak of the soul's immortality and the brotherhood of man, as parts of the universal revelation made to all men. The mind of man is like a chamber filled with the richest and most beautiful objects, but without light. The inspiration of God discloses these treasures, and by the gospel has shed light into this apartment. Each should walk by this light, and he will discover new truths in his soul; each should set before him the high standard of Christian excellence, "Be perfect as your Father in heaven," and, using the revelations made to others, seek new ones in himself, and in his own life incarnate more of the word which was in the beginning, and still is.

## IV

# THE CHRISTIANITY OF CHRIST, OF THE CHURCH AND OF SOCIETY

"Hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches,....I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."—BIBLE.

Every man has at times in his mind the ideal of what he should be, but is not. This ideal may be high and complete, or it may be quite low and insufficient; yet in all men that really seek to improve it is better than the actual character. Perhaps no one is satisfied with himself, so that he never wishes to be wiser, better, and more holy. Man never falls so low that he can see nothing higher than himself. This ideal man which we project, as it were, out of ourselves, and seek to make real; this wisdom, goodness, and holiness, which we aim to transfer from our thoughts to our life, has an action, more or less powerful, on each man, rendering him dissatisfied with present attainments, and restless unless he is becoming better. With some men it takes the rose out of the cheek, and forces them to wander a long pilgrimage of temptations before they reach the delectable mountains of tranquility, and find "rest for the soul" under the tree of life.

Now there is likewise an ideal of perfection floating before the eyes of a community or nation; and that ideal, which hovers, lofty or low, above the heads of our nation, is the Christian ideal, "the stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus." Christianity, then, is the ideal our nation is striving to realize in life; the sublime prophecy we are laboring to fulfil. Of course

some part thereof is made real and actual, but by no means the whole; for if it were, some higher ideal must immediately take its place. Hence there exists a difference between the actual state in which our countrymen are, and the ideal state in which they should be; just as there is a great gulf between what each man is, and what he knows he ought to become. But there is at this day not only a wide difference between the true Christian ideal and our actual state, but, what is still worse, there is a great dissimilarity between *our ideal* and the ideal of Christ. The Christianity of Christ is the highest and most perfect ideal ever presented to the longing eyes of man; but the Christianity of the church, which is the ideal held up to our eyes at this day, is a very different thing; and the Christianity of society, which is that last ideal imperfectly realized, has but the slightest affinity with Christ's sublime archetype of man. Let us look a little more narrowly into the matter.

Many years ago, at a time when all nations were in a state of deep moral and religious degradation; when the world lay exhausted and sick with long warfare; at a time when religion was supported by each civilized state, but when everywhere the religious form was outgrown and worn out, though the state yet watched this tattered garment with the most jealous care, calling each man a blasphemer who complained of its scantiness or pointed out its rents; at a time when no wise man, anywhere, had the smallest respect for the popular religion, except so far as he found it a convenient instrument to keep the mob in subjection to their lords; and when only the few had any regard for religion, into whose generous hearts it is by nature so deeply sown that they are born religious,— at such a

time, in a little corner of the world, of a people once pious but then corrupted to the heart, of a nation well known but only to be justly and universally hated, there was born a man, a right true man. He had no advantage of birth, for he was descended from the poorest of the people; none of education, for he was brought up in a little village, whose inhabitants were wicked to a proverb; and so little had schools and colleges to do for him that his townsmen wondered how he had learned to read. He had no advantage of aid or instruction from the great and the wise; but grew up and passed his life, mainly, with fishers and others of like occupation, the most illiterate of men.

This was a true man, such as had never been seen before. None such has risen since his time. He was so true that he could tolerate nothing false; so pure and holy that he, and perhaps he alone of all men, was justified in calling others by their proper name; even when that proper name was blind guide, fool, hypocrite, child of the devil. He found men forgetful of God. They seemed to fancy he was dead. They lived as if there had once been a God, who had grown old and deceased. They were mistaken also as to the nature of man. They saw he had a body; they forgot he is a soul, and has a soul's rights, and a soul's duties. Accordingly they believed there had been revelations, in the days of their fathers, when God was alive and active. They knew not there were revelations every day to faithful souls; revelations just as real, just as direct, just as true, just as sublime, just as valuable, as those of old time; for the Holy Spirit has not yet been exhausted, nor the river of God's inspiration been drunk dry by a few old Hebrews, great and divine souls though they were.

He found men clinging to tradition, as orphan girls cling to the robe of their mother dead and buried, hoping to find life in what had once covered the living. Thus men stood with their faces nailed to the past, their eyes fastened to the ground. They dreamed not that the sun rose each morning fresh and anew. So their teachers looked only at the west, seeking the light amid dark and thundering clouds, and mocking at such as, turning their faces to the east, expounded the signs of new morning, and "wished for the day."

This true man saw through their sad state, and comforting his fellows, he said, Poor brother man, you are deceived. God is still alive. His earth is under your feet. His heaven is over your head. He takes care of the sparrows. Justice, and wisdom, and mercy, and goodness, and virtue, and religion, are not superannuated and ready to perish. They are young as hunger and thirst, which shall be as fresh in the last man as they were in the first. God has never withdrawn from the universe, but he is now present and active in this spot, as ever on Sinai, and still guides and inspires all who will open their hearts to admit him there. Men are still men; born pure as Adam, and into no less a sphere. All that Abraham, Moses, or Isaiah possessed is open unto you, just as it was to them. If you will, your inspirations may be glorious as theirs, and your life as divine. Yea, far more; for the least in the new kingdom is greater than the greatest in the old. Trouble not yourselves, then, with the fringes and tassels of thread-bare tradition, but be a man on your own account.

Poor sinful brother, said he to fallen man, you have become a fool, a hypocrite, deceiving and deceived. You live as if there were no God, no soul; as if you

were but a beast. You have made yourself as a ghost, a shadow, not a man. Rise up and be a man, thou child of God. Cast off these cumbrous things of old. Let conscience be your lawgiver, reason your oracle, nature your temple, holiness your high-priest, and a divine life your offering. Be your own prophet; for the law and the old prophets were the best things men had before John; but now the kingdom of heaven is preached; leave them, for their work is done. Live no longer such a mean life as now. If you would be saved, love God with your whole heart, and man as yourself. Look not back for better days, and say Abraham is our father; but live now, and be not Abrahams, but something better. Look not forward to the time when your fancied deliverer shall come; but use the moment now in your hands. Wait not for the kingdom of God; but make it within you by a divine life. What if the Scribes and Pharisees sit in the seat of authority? Begin your kingdom of the divine life, and fast as you build it, difficulties will disappear; false men will perish, and the true rise up. Set not for your standard the limit of old times,— for here is one greater than Jonah or Solomon,— but be perfect as God. Call no man master. Call none father, save the Infinite Spirit. Be one with him; think his thoughts; feel his feelings; and live his will. Fear not: I have overcome the world, and you shall do yet greater things; I and the Father will dwell with you forever. Thus he spoke the word which men had longed to hear spoken, and others had vainly essayed to utter. While the great and gifted asked in derision, Art thou greater than our father Jacob? multitudes of the poor in spirit heard him; their hearts throbbed with the mighty pulsations of his heart.

They were swayed to and fro by his words, as an elm branch swings in the summer wind. They said, This is one of the old prophets, Moses, Elias, or even that greater prophet, the "desire of all nations." They shouted with one voice, He shall be our king; for human nature is always loyal at its heart, and never fails of allegiance, when it really sees a real hero of the soul, in whose heroism of holiness there is nothing sham. As the carnal pay a shallow worship to rich men and conquering chiefs, and other heroes of the flesh, so do men of the spirit revere a faithful hero of the soul, with whatever in them is deepest, truest, and most divine.

Before this man had seen five-and-thirty summers he was put to death by such men as thought old things were new enough, and false things sufficiently true, and, like owls and bats shriek fearfully when morning comes, because their day is the night, and their power, like the spectres of fable, vanishes as the cock-crowing ushers the morning in. Scarce had this divine youth begun to spread forth his brightness; men had seen but the twilight of his reason and inspiration; the full moon must have come at a later period of life, when experience and long contemplation had matured the divine gifts, never before nor since so prodigally bestowed, nor used so faithfully. But his doctrine was ripe, though he was young. The truth he received first-hand from God required no age to render it mature. So he perished. But as the oak the woodman fells in autumn on the mountain-side scatters ripe acorns over many a rood, some falling perchance into the bosom of a stream, to be cast up on distant fertile shores, so at his words sprang up a host of men, living men like himself, only feebler and of smaller

stature. They were quickened by his words, electrified by his love, and enchanted by his divine life. He who has never seen the sun can learn nothing of it from all our words; but he who has once looked thereon can never forget its burning brilliance. Thus these men "who had been with Jesus" were lit up by him. His spirit passed into them, as the sun into the air, with light and heat. They were possessed and overmastered by the new spirit they had drunken in. They cared only for truth and the welfare of their brother men. Pleasure and ease, the endearments of quiet life and the dalliance of home, were all but a bubble to them, as they sought the priceless pearls of a divine life. Their heart's best blood — what was it to these men? They poured it joyfully as festal wine was spent at the marriage in Cana of Galilee; for, as their teacher's life had taught them to live, so had his death taught them to die to the body, that the soul might live greater and more. In their hearts burned a living consciousness of God, a living love of man. Thus they became rare men, such as the world but seldom sees. Some of them had all of woman's tenderness, and more than man's will and strength of endurance, which earth and hell cannot force from the right path. Thus they were fitted for all work. So the Damascus steel, we are told, has a temper so exquisite it can trim a feather and cleave iron bars.

Forth to the world are sent these willing seedsmen of God, bearing in their bosom the Christianity of Christ, desiring to scatter this precious seed in every land of the wide world. The priest, the philosopher, the poet, and the king — all who had love for the past, or an interest in present delusions — join forces to cast down and tread into dust these Jewish fishermen and

tent-makers. They fetter the limbs, they murder the body; but the word of God is not bound, and the soul goes free. The seed, sown broadcast with faith and prayers, springs up and grows night and day, while men wake and while they sleep. Well it might, beneath the hot sun of persecution, and moistened by the dew that martyrs shed. The mailed Roman, hard as iron from his hundred battles, saw the heroism of Christian flesh, and beginning to worship that, saw with changed heart the heroism of the Christian soul; the spear dropped from his hand, and the man, newborn, prayed greater and stronger than before. Hard-hearted Roman men, and barbarians from the fabulous Hydaspis, stood round in the Forum while some Christian was burned with many tortures for his faith. They saw his gentle meekness, far stronger than the insatiate steel or flame, that never says enough. They whispered to one another — those hard-hearted men — in the rude speech of common life, more persuasive than eloquence. That young man has a dependent and feeble father, a wife, and a little babe, newly born, but a day old. He leaves them all to uncertain trouble, worse perhaps than his own; yet neither the love of young and blissful life, nor the care of parent, and wife, and child, can make him swerve an inch from the truth. Is there not God in this? And so when the winds scattered wide the eloquent ashes of the uncomplaining victim to regal or priestly pride, the symbolical dust, which Moses cast towards heaven, was less prolific and less powerful than his.

So the world went for two ages. But in less than three centuries the faith of that lowly youth, and so untimely slain, proclaimed by the fearless voice of

those trusting apostles, written in the blood of their hearts, and illuminated by the divine life they lived — this faith goes from its low beginning on the Galilean lake, through Jerusalem, Ephesus, Antioch, Corinth, and Alexandria; ascends the throne of the Cæsars, and great men, and temples, and towers, and rich cities, and broad kingdoms, lie at its feet. What wrought this wondrous change so suddenly; in the midst of such deadly peril; against such fearful odds? We are sometimes told it was because that divine youth had an unusual entrance into life; because he cured a few sick men, or fed many hungry men, by unwonted means. Believe it you who may, it matters not. Was it not rather because his doctrine was felt to be true, real, divine, satisfying to the soul; proclaimed by real men, true men, who felt what they said, and lived what they felt? Man was told there was a God still alive, and that God a father; that man had lost none of that high nature which shone in Moses, Solomon, or Isaiah, or Theseus, or Solon, but was still capable of virtue, thought, religion, to a degree those sages not only never realized, but never dreamed of. He was told there were laws for his nature, laws to be kept; duties for his nature, duties to be done; rights for his nature, rights to be enjoyed; hopes for his nature, hopes to be realized, and more than realized, as man goes forward to his destiny, with perpetual increase of stature. It needs no miracle, but a man, to spread such doctrines. You shall as soon stay Niagara with a straw, or hold in the swelling surges of an Atlantic storm with the "spider's most attenuated thread," as prevent the progress of God's truth, with all the kings, poets, priests, and philosophers the world has ever seen; and for this plain reason, that truth and God are

on the same side. Well said the ancient, "Above all things truth beareth away the victory."

Such was the nature, such the origin of the Christianity of Christ, the true ideal of a divine life; such its history for three hundred years. It is true that, soon as it was organized into a church, there were divisions therein, and fierce controversies, Paul withstanding fickle Peter to the face. It is true, hirelings came from time to time to live upon the flock; indolent men wished to place their arm-chair in the church and sleep undisturbed; ambitious men sought whom they might devour. But in spite of all this, there was still a real religious life. Christianity was something men felt, and felt at home, and in the market-place, by fire-side and field-side, no less than in the temple. It was something they would make sacrifice for, leaving father and mother and child and wife, if needful; something they would die for, thanking God they were accounted worthy of so great an end. Still more, it was something they lived for every day; their religion and their life were the same.

Such was Christianity as it was made real in the lives of the early Christians. But now, the Christianity of the church, by which is meant that somewhat which is taught in our religious books, and preached in our pulpits, is a thing quite different, nay, almost opposite. It often fetters and enslaves men. It tells them they must assent to all the doctrines and stories of the Old Testament, and to all the doctrines and stories of the New Testament; that they must ascribe a particular and well-defined character to God, must believe as they are bid respecting Christ and the Bible or they cannot be saved. If they disbelieve, then is the anathema uttered against

them; true, the anathema is but mouthfuls of spoken wind, yet still it is uttered as though it could crush and kill. The church insists less on the divine life than on the doctrines a man believes. It measures a man's religion by his creed, and calls him a heathen or a Christian as that creed is short or long. Now, in the Christianity of Christ there is no creed essential, unless it be that lofty desire to become perfect as God; no form essential, but love to man and love to God. In a word, a divine life on the earth is the all in all with the Christianity of Christ. This and this only was the kingdom of God, and eternal life. Now the church, as keeper of God's kingdom, bids you assent to arbitrary creeds of its own device, and bow the knee to its forms. Thus the Christianity of the church, as it is set forth at this day, insults the soul, and must belittle a man before it can bless him. The church is too small for the soul; "the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it." Some writer tells us of a statue of Olympian Jove, majestic and awful in its exquisite beauty, but seated under a roof so low, and within walls so narrow, that should the statue rise to its feet, and spread the arms, it must demolish its temple, roof and wall. Thus sits man in the Christian church at this day. Let him think in what image he is made; let him feel his immortal nature, and rising, take a single step towards the divine life — then where is the church?

The range of subjects the church deigns to treat of is quite narrow, its doctrines abstract; and thus Christianity is made a letter, and not a life; an occasional affair of the understanding, not the daily business of the heart. The ideal now held up to the public as the

highest word ever spoken to man, is not the ideal of Christ, the measure of a perfect man, not even the ideal of the apostles and early Christians. Anointed teachers confess without shame that goodness is better than Christianity. True, alas! it is better in degree; yes, different in kind from the Christianity of the church. Hence, in our pulpits we hear but little of the great doctrines of Jesus, the worth of the soul, the value of the present moment, the brotherhood of all men, and their equality before God; the necessity of obeying that perfect law God has written on the soul, the consequences which follow necessarily from disobeying — consequences which even omnipotence cannot remove; and the blessed results for now and for ever that arise from obedience, and the all-importance of a divine life; the power of the soul to receive the Holy Ghost; the divine might of a regenerate man; the presence of God and Christ *now* in faithful hearts; the inspiration of good men; the kingdom of God on the earth — these form not the substance of the church's preaching. Still less are they applied to life, and the duties which come of them shown and enforced. The church is quick to discover and denounce the smallest deviation from the belief of dark ages, and to condemn vices no longer popular; it is conveniently blind to the great fictions which lie at the foundation of church and state; sees not the rents, daily yawning more wide, in the bowing walls of old institutions; and never dreams of those causes, which, like the drug of the prophet in the fable, are rending asunder the idol of brass and clay men have set up to worship. So the mole, it has been said, within the tithe of an inch its vision extends over, is keener of insight than the lynx or the eagle; but to all beyond that narrow range is stone blind.

Alas! what men call Christianity, and adore as the best thing they see, has been degraded; so that if men should be all that the pulpit commonly demands of them, they would by no means be Christians. To such a pass have matters reached, that if Paul should come upon the earth now, as of old, it is quite doubtful that he could be admitted to the Christian church; for though Felix thought much knowledge had made the apostle mad, yet Paul ventured no opinion on points respecting the nature of God, and the history of Christ, where our pulpits utter dogmatic and arbitrary decisions, condemning as infidels and accursed all such as disagree therewith, be their life never so godly. These things are notorious. Still more, it may be set down as quite certain, that if Jesus could return from the other world, and bring to New England that same boldness of inquiry which he brought to Judea, that same love of living truth and scorn of dead letters; could he speak as he then spoke, and live again as he lived before,— he also would be called an infidel by the church, be abused in our newspapers, for such is our wont, and only not stoned in the streets, because that is not our way of treating such men as tell us the truth.

Such is the Christianity of the church in our times. It does not look *forward* but *backward*. It does not ask truth at first hand from God; seeks not to lead men directly to him, through the divine life, but only to make them walk in the old paths trodden by some good pious Jews, who, were they to come back to earth, could as little understand our circumstances as we theirs. The church expresses more concern that men should walk in these peculiar paths, than that they should reach the goal. Thus the means are made the end. It enslaves men to the Bible; makes it the soul's master,

not its servant; forgetting that the Bible, like the Sabbath, was made for man, not man for the Bible. It makes man the less and the Bible the greater. The Savior said, Search the scriptures; the apostle recommended them as profitable reading; the church says, Believe the scriptures, if not with the consent of reason and conscience, why without that consent or against it. It rejects all attempts to humanize the Bible, and separates its fictions from its facts; and would fain wash its hands in the heart's blood of those who strip the robe of human art, ignorance, or folly from the celestial form of divine truth. It trusts the imperfect scripture of the word, more than the word itself, writ by God's finger on the living heart. "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," says the apostle. But where the spirit of the church is, there is slavery. It would make all men think the same thoughts, feel the same feelings, worship by the same form.

The church itself worships not God, who is all in all, but Jesus, a man born of woman. Grave teachers, in defiance of his injunction, bid us pray to Christ. It supposes the soul of all our souls cannot hear, or will not accept a prayer, unless offered formally, in the church's phrase, forgetting that we also are men, and God takes care of oxen and sparrows and hears the young ravens when they cry, though they pray not in any form or phrase. Still, called by whatever name, called by an idol's name, the true God hears the living prayer. And yet perhaps the best feature of Christianity, as it is now preached, is its idolatrous worship of Christ. Jesus was the brother of all. He had more in common with all men than they have with one another. But he, the brother of all, has been made to appear as the master of all; to speak with an authority

greater than that of reason, conscience, and faith — an office his sublime and God-like spirit would revolt at. But yet, since he lived divine on earth, and was a hero of the soul, and the noblest and largest hero the world has ever seen, perhaps the idolatry that is paid him is the nearest approach to true worship which the mass of men can readily make in these days. Reverence for heroes has its place in history; and though worship of the greatest soul ever swathed in the flesh, however much he is idealized and represented as incapable of sin, is without measure below the worship of the ineffable God, still it is the purest and best of our many idolatries in the nineteenth century. Practically speaking, its worst feature is that it mars and destroys the highest ideal of man, and makes us beings of very small discourse, that look only backward.

The influence of real Christianity is to disenthral the man, to restore him to his nature, until he obeys conscience, reason, and religion, and is made free by that obedience. It gives him the largest liberty of the sons of God, so that as faith in truth becomes deeper the man is greater and more divine. But now those pious souls who accept the church's Christianity are, in the main, crushed and degraded by their faith. They dwindle daily in the church's keeping. Their worship is not faith, but fear; and bondage is written legibly on their forehead, like the mark set upon Cain. They resemble the dwarfed creed they accept. Their mind is encrusted with unintelligible dogmas. They fear to love man lest they offend God. Artificial in their anxiety, and morbid in their self-examination, their life is sickly and wretched. Conscience cannot speak its mother tongue to them; reason does not utter its oracles, nor love cast out fear. Alas! the church speaks

not to the hearty and the strong; and the little and the weak, who accept its doctrines, become weaker and less thereby. Thus woman's holier heart is often abased and defiled, and the deep-thoughted and true of soul forsake the church, as righteous Lot, guided by an angel, fled out of Sodom. There will always be wicked men who scorn a pure church, and perhaps great men too high to need its instructions. But what shall we say when the church, as it is, impoverishes those it was designed to enrich, and debilitates so often the trusting souls that seek shelter in its arm?

Alas for us, we see the Christianity of the church is a very poor thing, a very little better than heathenism. It takes God out of the world of nature and of man, and hides him in the church. Nay, it does worse; it limits God, who possesseth heaven and earth, and is from everlasting to everlasting, restricting his influence and inspiration to a little corner of the world and a few centuries of history, dark and uncertain. Even in this narrow range, it makes a deity like itself, and gives us not God, but Jehovah. It takes the living Christ out of the heart, and transfigures him in the clouds, till he becomes an anomalous being, not God, and not man; but a creature whose holiness is not the divine image he has sculptured for himself out of the rock of life, but something placed over him, entirely by God's hand, and without his own effort. It has taken away our Lord, and left us a being whom we know not; severed from us by his prodigious birth, and his alleged relation to God, such as none can share. What have we in common with such an one, raised above all chance of error, all possibility of sin, and still more surrounded by God at each moment, as no other man has been? It has transferred him to the clouds. It makes Chris-

tianity a belief, not a life. It takes religion out of the world, and shuts it up in old books, whence, from time to time, on Sabbaths, and fast-days and feast-days, it seeks to evoke the divine spirit, as the witch of Endor is fabled to have called up Samuel from the dead. It tells you, with grave countenance, to believe every word spoken by the apostles,— weak, Jewish, fallible, prejudiced, mistaken as they sometimes were — for this reason, because forsooth Peter's shadow and Paul's pocket-handkerchief cured the lame and the blind. It never tells you, Be faithful to the spirit God has given; open your soul and you also shall be inspired, beyond Peter and Paul it may be, for great though they were, they saw not all things, and have not absorbed the Godhead. No doubt the Christian church has been the ark of the world; no doubt some individual churches are now free from these disgraces; still the picture is true as a whole.

Alas! it is true that men are profited by such pitiful teachings; for the church is above the community, and the *Christianity of society* is far below that of the church; even in *that* deep there is a lower deep. This is a hard saying, no doubt. But let us look the facts in the face, and see how matters are. It is written in travelers' journals and taught in our school-books that the Americans are Christians! It is said in courts of justice that Christianity is part of the law of the land; with the innocent meaning, it is likely, that the law of the land is part of Christianity. But what proofs have we that the men of New England are Christians? We point to our churches. Lovely emblems they are of devotion. In city and village, by road-side and stream-side, they point meekly their taper finger to the sky, the enchanting symbol of Christian aspiration

and a Christian life. Through all our land of hill and valley, of springs and brooks, they stand, and most beautiful do they make it, catching the earliest beam of day, and burning in the last flickering rays of the long-lingering sun. Sweet, too, is the breath of the Sabbath bell, dear to the hearts of New England; it floats undulating on the tranquil air, like a mother's brooding note, calling her children to their home. We mention our Bibles and religious books found in the houses of the rich, and read with blissful welcome beside the hearth-stone of the poor. We point to our learned clergy, the appointed defenders of the letter of Christianity. All this proves nothing. The apostles could point to no long series of learned scribes; only to a few rough fishermen in sheep-skins and goat-skins. They had no multitude of Bibles and religious books, for they cast behind them the Old Testament as a law of sin and death, and the New Testament was not then written, save in the heart; they had no piles of marble and mortar, no silvery and sweet-noted bell to rouse for them the slumbering morn. Yet were those men Christians. They did not gather of a Lord's day in costly temples to keep an old form, or kill the long-delaying hours; but in small upper rooms, on the sea-shore, beneath a tree, in caves of the desert mountains, or the tombs of dead men in cities, met those noble hearts to worship God at first hand, and exhort one another to a manly life and a martyr's death, if need were.

We see indeed an advance in our people above all ancient time; we fondly say, the mantle of a more liberal culture is thrown over us all. The improved state of society brings many a blessing in its train. The arts diffuse comfort; industry and foresight af-

ford us, in general, a competence; schools and the printing-press, which works indefatigably with its iron hand day and night, spread knowledge wide. Our hospitals, our asylums and churches for the poor, give some signs of a Christian spirit. Crimes against man's person are less frequent than of old, and the legal punishments less frightful and severe. The rich do not ride rough-shodden over the poor. These things prove that the age have advanced somewhat. They do not prove that the spirit of religion, of Christianity, of love, the spirit of Christ, of God, are present among us and active; for enlightened prudence, the most selfish of selfishness, would lead to the same results; and who has the hardihood to look facts in the face and call our society spiritual and Christian? The social spirit of Christianity demands that the strong assist the weak.

We appeal as proofs of our Christianity to our attempts at improving ruder tribes, to our Bibles and missionaries, sent with much self-denial and sacrifice to savage races. Admitting the nobleness of the design, granting the Christian spirit is shown in these enterprises — for this at least must be allowed, and all heathen antiquity is vainly challenged for a similar case — there is still a most melancholy reverse to this flattering picture. Where shall we find a savage nation on the wide world that has, on the whole, been blessed by its intercourse with Christians? Where one that has not, most manifestly, been polluted and cursed by the Christian foot? Let this question be asked from Siberia to Patagonia, from the ninth century to the nineteenth; let it be put to the nations we defraud of their spices and their furs, leaving them in return our religion and our sin; let it be asked of the red-man,

whose bones we have broken to fragments, and trodden into bloody mire on the very spot where his mother bore him; let it be asked of the black-man, torn by our cupidity from his native soil, whose sweat, exacted by Christian stripes, fattens our fields of cotton and corn, and brims the wine-cup of national wealth; whose chained hands are held vainly up as his spirit strives to God, with great, overmastering prayers for vengeance, and seem to clutch at the volleyed thunders of just, but terrible retribution, pendent over our heads. Let it be asked of all these, and who dares stay to hear the reply, and learn what report of our Christianity goes up to God?

We need not compare ourselves with our fathers, and say we are more truly religious than they were. Shame on us if we are not. Shame on us if we are always to be babies in religion, and whipped reluctant into decent goodness by fear, never growing up to spiritual manhood. Admitting we are a more Christian people than our fathers, let us measure ourselves with the absolute standard. What is religion amongst us? Is it the sentiment of the infinite penetrating us with such depth of power that we would, if need were, leave father and mother and child and wife, to dwell in friendless solitudes, so that we might worship God in peace? O no, we were very fools to make such a sacrifice, when called on for the sake of such a religion as that commonly preached, commonly accepted and lived. It is not worth that cost, so mean and degraded is religion among us. Religion does not possess us as the sun possesses the violets, giving them warmth, and fragrance, and color, and beauty. It does not lead to a divine character. One would fancy the bans of wedlock were forbidden between Christianity and life,

also, as we are significantly told they have been between religion and philosophy; so that the feeling and the thought, like sterile monks and nuns, never approach to clasp hands, but dwell joyless, each in a several cell. Religion has become chiefly, and with the well-clad mass of men, a matter of convention, and they write Christian with their name as they write "Mr." because it is respectable; their fathers did so before them. Thus to be Christians comes to nothing, it is true, but it costs nothing, and is fairly worth what it costs.

Religion should be "a thousand-voiced psalm" from the heart of man to man's God, who is the original of goodness, truth, and beauty, and is revealed in all that is good, true, and beautiful. But religion is amongst us in general but a compliance with custom, a prudential calculation, a matter of expediency, whereby men hope, through giving up a few dollars in the shape of pew-tax, and a little time in the form of church-going, to gain the treasures of heaven and eternal life. Thus religion has become profit; not reverence of the highest, but vulgar hope and vulgar fear; a working for wages, to be estimated by the rules of loss and gain. Men love religion as the mercenary worldling his well-endowed wife; not for herself, but for what she brings. They think religion is useful to the old, the sick, and the poor, to charm them with a comfortable delusion through the cloudy land of this earthly life; they wish themselves to keep some running account therewith, against the day when they also shall be old, and sick, and poor. Christianity has two modes of action, direct on the heart and life of a man, and indirect through conventions, institutions, and other machinery; and in our time the last is almost its sole influence. Hence

men reckon Christianity as valuable to keep men in order; it would have been good policy for a shrewd man to have invented it, on speculation, like other contrivances, for the utility of the thing. In their eyes the church, especially the church for the poor, is necessary as the court-house or the jail; the minister is a well-educated Sabbath-day constable; and both are parts of the great property establishment of the times. They value religion, not because it is true and divine, but because it serves a purpose. They deem it needful as the poll-tax, or the militia system, a national bank or a sub-treasury. They value it among other commodities; they might give it a place in their inventories of stock, and hope of heaven or faith in Christ might be summed up in the same column with money at one per cent.

The problem of men is not first the kingdom of God, that is, a perfect life on the earth, lived for its own sake; but first all other things, and then, if the kingdom of God come of itself, or is thrown into the bargain, like pack-thread and paper with a parcel of goods, why very well; they are glad of it. It keeps "all other things" from soiling. Does religion take hold of the heart of us? Here and there, among rich men and poor men, especially among women, you shall find a few really religious; whose life is a prayer, and Christianity their daily breath. They would have been religious had they been cradled among cannibals and before the flood. They are divine men, of whom the spirit of God seems to take early hold, and reason and religion to weave up, by celestial instinct, the warp and woof of their daily life. Judge not the age by its religious geniuses. The mass of men care little for Christianity; were it not so, the sins of the forum and

the market-place, committed in a single month, would make the land rock to its centre. Men think of religion at church on the Sabbath; they make sacrifices, often great sacrifices, to support public worship, and attend it most sedulously, these men and women. But here the matter ends. Religion does not come into their soul, does not show itself in their housekeeping and trading. It does not shine out of the windows of morning and evening, and speak to them at every turn. How many young men in the thousand say thus to themselves, Of this will I make sure, a Christian character and divine life, all other things be as God sends? How many ever set their hearts on any moral and religious object, on achieving a perfect character, for example, with a fraction of the interest they take in the next election? Nay, woman also must share the same condemnation. Though into her rich heart God more generously sows the divine germs of religion; though this is her strength, her loveliness, her primal excellence; yet she also has sold her birthright for tinsel ornaments, and the admiration of deceitful lips. Men think of religion when they are sick, old, in trouble, or about to die, forgetting that it is a crown of life at all times; man's choicest privilege, his highest possession, the chain that sweetly links him to heaven. If good for anything it is good to live by. It is a small thing to die religiously, a devil could do that; but to live divine is man's work.

Since religion is thus regarded or disregarded by men, we find that talent and genius, getting insight of this, float off to the market, the workshop, the senate, the farmer's field or the court-house, and bring home with honor the fleece of gold. Meanwhile anointed dulness, arrayed in canonicals, his lesson duly conned,

presses semi-somnous the consecrated cushions of the pulpit, and pours forth weekly his impotent drone, to be blest with bland praises so long as he disturbs not respectable iniquity slumbering in his pew, nor touches an actual sin of the times, nor treads an inch beyond the beaten path of the church. Well is it for the safety of the actual church that genius and talent forsake its rotten walls, to build up elsewhere the church of the first-born, and pray largely and like men, Thy kingdom come. There is a concealed scepticism among us, all the more deadly because concealed. It is not a denial of God — though this it is whispered to our ear is not rare — for men have opened their eyes too broadly not to notice the fact of God, everywhere apparent, without and within; still less is it disbelief of the scriptures; there has always been too much belief in their letter, though far too little living of their truths. But there is a doubt of man's moral and religious nature, a doubt if righteousness be so superexcellent. We distrust goodness and religion, as the blind doubt if the sun be so fine as men tell of, or as the deaf might jeer at the ecstatic raptures of a musician. Who among men trusts conscience as he trusts his eye or ear? With them the highest in man is self-interest. When they come to outside goodness, therefore, they are driven by fear of hell as by a scorpion whip, or bribed by the distant pleasures of heaven. Accordingly, if they embrace Christianity, they make Jesus, who is the archetype of a divine life, not a man like his brothers, who had human appetites and passions, was tempted in the flesh, was cold, and hungry, and faint, and tired, and sleepy, and dull — each in its season — and who needed to work out his own salvation, as we also must do; but they make him an unnatural

character, passionless, amphibious, not man and not God; whose holiness was poured on him from some celestial urn, and so was in no sense his own work; and who, therefore, can be no example for us, goaded as we are by appetite, and bearing the ark of our destiny in our own hands. It is not the essential element of Christianity, *love to man and love to God*, men commonly gather from the New Testament; but some perplexing dogma or some oriental dream. How few religious men can you find whom Christianity takes by the hand and leads through the Saharas and Siberias of the world; men whose lives are noble, who can speak of Christianity as of their trading and marrying, out of their own experience, because they have lived it! There is enough cant of religion, creeds written on sanctimonious faces, as signs of that emptiness of heart "which passeth show," but how litle real religion, that comes home to men's heart and life, let experience decide.

Yet, if he would, man cannot live all to this world. If not religious, he will be superstitious. If he worship not the true God, he will have his idols. The web of our mortal life, with its warp of destiny and its woof of free will, is most strangely woven up by the flying shuttles of time, which rest not, wake we or sleep; but through this wondrous tissue of the perishing there runs the gold thread of eternity, and like the net Peter saw in his vision, full of strange beasts and creeping things, this web is at last seen to be caught up to Heaven by its four corners, and its common things become no longer unclean. We cannot always be false to religion. It is the deepest want of man. Satisfy all others, we soon learn that we cannot live by bread only, for as an ancient has said, "it is not the growing

of fruits that nourisheth man, but thy word, which preserveth them that put their trust in thee." Without the divine life we are portionless, bereft of strength; without the living consciousness of God, we are orphans, left to the bleakness of the world.

But our paper must end. The Christianity of the church is a very poor thing; it is not bread, and it is not drink. The Christianity of society is still worse; it is bitter in the mouth and poison in the blood. Still men are hungering and thirsting, though not always knowingly, after the true bread of life. Why shall we perish with hunger? In our Father's house is enough and to spare. The Christianity of Christ is high and noble as ever. The religion of reason, of the soul, the word of God, is still strong and flame-like, as when first it dwelt in Jesus, the chiefest incarnation of God, and now the pattern-man. Age has not dimmed the luster of this light that lighteneth all, though they cover their eyes in obstinate perversity, and turn away their faces from this great sight. Man has lost none of his God-likeness. He is still the child of God, and the Father is near to us as to him who dwelt in his bosom. Conscience has not left us. Faith and hope still abide; and love never fails. The Comforter is with us; and though the man Jesus no longer blesses the earth, the ideal Christ, formed in the heart, is with us to the end of the world. Let us then build on these. Use good words when we can find them, in the church, or out of it. Learn to pray, to pray greatly and strong; learn to reverence what is highest; above all learn to live, to make religion daily work, and Christianity our common life. All days shall then be the Lord's day; our homes, the house of God, and our labor, the ritual of religion. Then we shall not glory

in men, for all things shall be ours; we shall not be impoverished by success, but enriched by affliction.

Our service shall be worship, not idolatry. The burdens of the Bible shall not overlay and crush us; its wisdom shall make us strong, and its piety enchant us. Paul and Jesus shall not be our masters, but elder brothers, who open the pearly gate of truth and cheer us on, leading us to the tree of life. We shall find the kingdom of heaven and enjoy it now, not waiting till death ferries us over to the other world. We shall then repose beside the rock of ages, smitten by divine hands, and drink the pure water of life as it flows from the eternal, to make earth green and glad. We shall serve no longer a bond-slave to tradition, in the leprous host of sin, but become free men, by the law and spirit of life. Thus like Paul shall we form the Christ within; and like Jesus, serving and knowing God directly, with no mediator intervening, become one with him. Is not this worth a man's wish; worth his prayers; worth his work; to seek the living Christianity, the Christianity of Christ? Not having this, we seem but bubbles; bubbles on an ocean, shoreless and without bottom; bubbles that sparkle a moment in the sun of life, then burst to be no more. But with it we are men, immortal souls, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

## V

## THE PHARISEES

If we may trust the statement of grave philosophers, who have devoted their lives to science, and given proofs of what they affirm, which are manifest to the senses, as well as evident to the understanding, there were once, in very distant ages, classes of monsters on the earth which differed, in many respects, from any animals now on its surface. They find the bones of these animals "under the bottom of the monstrous world," or imbedded in masses of stone which have since formed over them. They discover the foot-prints, also, of these monstrous creatures in what was once soft clay, but has since become hard stone, and so has preserved these traces for many a thousand years. These creatures gradually became scarce, and at last disappeared entirely from the face of the earth, while nobler races grew up and took their place. The relics of these monsters are gathered together by the curious. They excite the wonder of old men and little girls, of the sage and the clown.

Now there was an analogous class of moral monsters in old time. They began quite early, though no one knows who was the first of the race. They have left their foot-prints all over the civilized globe, in the mould of institutions, laws, politics, and religions, which were once pliant, but have since become petrified in the ages, so that they seem likely to preserve these marks for many centuries to come. The relics of these moral monsters are preserved for our times in some of the

histories and institutions of past ages. But they excite no astonishment when discovered, because, while the sauri of gigantic size, the mammoth, and the mastodon, are quite extinct, the last of the Pharisees has not yet been seen, but his race is vigorous and flourishing now as of old. Specimens of this monster are by no means rare. They are found living in all countries and in every walk of life. We do not search for them in the halls of a museum or the cabinets of the curious, but every man has seen a Pharisee going at large on the earth. The race, it seems, began early. The Pharisees are of ancient blood, some tracing their genealogy to the great father of lies himself. However this may be, it is certain we find them well known in very ancient times. Moses encountered them in Egypt. They counterfeited his wonders, as the legend relates, and "did so with their enchantments." They followed him into the desert, and their gold, thrown into the fire, by the merest accident came out in the shape of an idol. Jealous of the honor of Moses, they begged him to silence Eldad and Medad, on whom the spirit of the Lord rested, saying, "Lord Moses, rebuke them." They troubled the Messiah in a later day; they tempted him with a penny; sought to entangle him in his talk, strove to catch him, feigning themselves just men. They took counsel to slay him, soon as they found cunning of no avail. If one was touched to the heart by true words — which, though rare, once happened, — he came by night to that great prophet of God, through fear of his fellow Pharisees. They could boast that no one of their number had ever believed on the Savior of the nations — because his doctrine was a new thing. If a blind man was healed, they put him out of the synagogue, because his eyes were opened,

and, as he confessed, by the new teacher. They bribed one of his avaricious followers to betray him with a kiss, and at last put to death the noblest of all the sons of God, who had but just opened the burden of his mission. Yet they took care — those precious philanthropists — not to defile themselves by entering the judgment-hall with a pagan. When the spirit rose again, they hired the guard to tell a lie, and say, "His disciples came by night and stole the body while we slept."

This race of men troubled Moses, stoned the prophets, crucified the Savior, and persecuted the apostles. They entered the Christian church soon as it became popular and fashionable. Then they bound the yoke of Jewish tradition on true men's necks, and burned with fire, and blasted with anathemas, such as shook it off, walking free and upright, like men. The same race is alive, and by no means extinct, or likely soon to be so.

It requires but few words to tell what makes up the sum of the Pharisee. He is, at the bottom, a man like other men, made for whatever is high and divine. God has not curtailed him of a man's birthright. He has in him the elements of a Moses or a Messiah. But his aim is to seem good and excellent, not to be good and excellent. He wishes, therefore, to have all of goodness and religion, except goodness and religion itself. Doubtless, he would accept these also, were they to be had for the asking, and cost nothing to keep; but he will not pay the price. So he would make a covenant with God and the devil, with righteousness and sin, and keep on good terms with both. He would unite the two worlds of salvation and iniquity, having the appearance of the one, and the reality of the other. He would

work in deceit and wickedness, and yet appear to men with clean hands. He will pray in one direction, and yet live in just the opposite way, and thus attempt, as it were, to blind the eyes and cheat the justice of all-knowing God. He may be defined, in one sentence, as the circumstances of a good man, after the good man has left them. Such is the sum of the Pharisee in all ages and nations, variously modified by the customs and climate of the place he happens to dwell in, just as the rabbit is white in winter and brown in summer, but is still the same rabbit, its complexion only altered to suit the color of the ground.

The Jewish Pharisees began with an honest man, who has given name to the class, as some say. He was moral and religious, a lover of man and God. He saw through the follies of his time, and rose above them. He felt the evils that oppress poor mortal man, and sought to remove them. But it often happens that a form is held up, after its spirit has departed, and a name survives, while the reality which bore this name is gone for ever. Just as they keep at Vienna the crown and sword of a giant king, though for some centuries no head has been found large enough to wear the crown, no hand of strength to wield the sword, and their present owner is both imbecile and diminutive — so it was in this case. The subsequent races of Pharisees cherished the form after the spirit had left it, clinging all the closer because they knew there was nothing in it, and feared, if they relaxed their hold, it would collapse through its emptiness, or blow away and be lost, leaving them to the justice of God, and the vengeance of men they had mocked at and insulted. In Christ's time the Pharisee professed to reverence the law of Moses, but contrived to escape its excellent

spirit. He loved the letter, but he shunned the law. He could pay tithes of his mint, anise and cummin, which the law of Moses did not ask for, and omit mercy, justice and truth, which both that and the law of God demanded. He could not kindle a fire nor pluck an ear of corn on the Sabbath, though so cold and hungry that he thought of nothing but his pains, and looked for the day to end. He could not eat bread without going through the ceremony of lustration. He could pray long and loud where he was sure to be heard, at the corners of the streets, and give alms in the public places, to gain the name of devout, charitable or munificent, while he devoured widows' houses or the inheritance of orphans in private, and his inward part was full of ravening and wickedness.

There are two things which pass for religion in two different places. The first is the love of what is right, good, and lovely; the love of man, the love of God. This is the religion of the New Testament, of Jesus Christ; it leads to a divine life, and passes for religion before the pure eyes of that Father of all, who made us and the stars over our heads. The other is a mere belief in certain doctrines, which may be true or false; a compliance with certain forms, either beautiful or ludicrous. It does not demand a love of what is right, good, and lovely, a love of man or God. Still less does it ask for a life in conformity with such sentiments. This passes for religion in the world, in kings' courts, and in councils of the church, from the council at Nice to the synod at Dort. The first is a vital religion, a religion of life. The other is a theological religion, a religion of death; or, rather, it is no religion at all, all of religion but religion itself. It often gets into the place of religion, just as the lizard may get into the

place of the lion, when he is out, and no doubt sets up to be lion for the time, and attempts a roar. The one is the religion of men, and the best men that have ever lived, in all ages and countries; the other is the religion of Pharisees, and the worst men in all ages and in all countries.

This race of men, it has been said, is not yet exhausted. They are as numerous as in John the Baptist's time, and quite as troublesome. Now, as then, they prefer the praise of men to the praise of God; which means, they would rather seem good, at small cost, than take the pains to be good. They oppose all reforms, as they opposed the Messiah. They traduce the best of men, especially such as are true to conscience, and live out their thought. They persecute men sent on God's high errand of mercy and love. Which of the prophets have they not stoned? They build the tombs of deceased reformers, whom they would calumniate and destroy, were they now living and at work. They can wear a cross of gold on their bosom, "which Jews might kiss and infidels adore." But had they lived in the days of Pilate, they would have nailed the Son of God to a cross of wood, and now crucify him afresh, and put him to an open shame. These Pharisees may be found in all ranks of life; in the front and the rear, among the radicals and the conservatives, the rich and the poor. Though the Pharisees are the same in nature, differing only superficially, they may yet be conveniently divided into several classes, following some prominent features.

The Pharisee of the fireside.— He is the man who at home professes to do all for the comfort and convenience of his family, his wife, his children, his friends; yet, at

the same time, does all for his own comfort and convenience. He hired his servants only to keep them from the alms-house. He works them hard, lest they have too much spare time, and grow indolent. He provides penuriously for them, lest they contract extravagant habits. Whatever gratification he gives himself, he does entirely for others. Does he go to a neighboring place to do some important errands for himself, and a trifle for his friend — the journey was undertaken solely on his friend's account. Is he a husband — he is always talking of the sacrifice he makes for his wife, who yet never knows when it is made, and if he had love, there would be no sacrifice. Is he a father — he tells his children of his self-denial for their sake, while they find the self-denial is all on their side, and if he loved them, self-denial would be a pleasure. He speaks of his great affection for them, which, if he felt, it would show itself, and never need be spoken of. He tells of the heavy burdens borne for their sake, while, if they were thus borne, they would not be accounted burdens nor felt as heavy. But this kind of Pharisee, though more common than we sometimes fancy, is yet the rarest species. Most men drop the cloak of hypocrisy when they enter their home, and seem what they are. Of them, therefore, no more need be spoken.

The Pharisee of the printing press.— The Pharisee of this stamp is a sleek man, who edits a newspaper. His care is never to say a word offensive to the orthodox ears of his own coterie. His aim is to follow in the wake of public opinion, and utter, from time to to time, his oracular generalities, so that whether the course be prosperous or unsuccessful, he may seem to have predicted it. If he must sometimes speak of a new measure, whose fate is doubtful with the people, no

one knows whether he would favor or reject it — so equally do his arguments balance one another. Never was prophecy more clearly inspired and impersonal. He cannot himself tell what his prediction meant, until it is fulfilled. "If Crœsus crosses the Halys, he shall destroy a great empire," thunders the Pharisee, from his editorial corner, but takes care not to tell whether Persia or Lydia shall come to the ground. Suggest a doubt that he ever opposed a measure which has since become popular, he will prove you the contrary, and his words really have that meaning, though none suspected it at the time, and he least of all. In his, as in all predictions, there is a double sense. If he would abuse a man or an institution which is somewhat respectable, and against which he has a private grudge, he inserts most calumnious articles in the shape of a "communication," declaring at the same time his "columns are open to all." He attacks an innocent man soon as he is unpopular; but gives him no chance to reply, though in never so Christian a spirit. Let a distinguished man censure one comparatively unknown, he would be very glad to insert the injured man's defence, but is prevented by "a press of political matter," or "a press of foreign matter," till the day of reply has passed. Let an humble scholar send a well-written article for his journal, which does not square with the notions of the coterie; it is returned with insult added to the wrong, and an "editorial" appears putting the public on its guard against such as hold the obnoxious opinions, calling them knaves and fools, or what is more taking with the public at this moment, when the majority are so very faithful and religious, "infidels" and "atheists." The aim of this man is to please his party, and seem fair. Send him a paper reflecting on

the measures or the men of that party, he tells you it would do no good to insert it, though ably written. He tells his wife the story, adding, that he must have meat and drink, and the article would have cost a "subscriber." He begins by loving his party better than mankind; he goes on by loving their opinions more than truth, and ends by loving his own interest better than that of his party. He might be painted as a man sitting astride a fence, which divided two enclosures, with his hands thrust into his pockets. As men come into one or the other enclosure, he bows obsequiously and smiles; bowing lowest, and smiling sweetest, to the most distinguished person. When the people have chosen their place, he comes down from "that bad eminence" to the side where the majority are assembled, and will prove to your teeth that he had always stood on that side, and was never on the fence, except to reconnoitre the enemy's position.

The Pharisee of the street.— He is the smooth sharper, who cheats you in the name of honor. He wears a sanctimonious face, and plies a smooth tongue. His words are rosemary and marjoram for sweetness. To hear him lament at the sins practiced in business, you would take him for the most honest of men. Are you in trade with him — he expresses a great desire to serve you; talks much of the subject of honor; honor between buyer and seller, honor among tradesmen, honor among thieves. He is full of regrets that the world has become so wicked; wonders that any one can find temptation to defraud, and belongs to a society for the suppression of shoplifting or some similar offense he is in no danger of committing, and so

> "Compounds for sins he is inclined to,
> By damning those he has no mind to."

Does this Pharisee meet a philanthropist — he is full of plans to improve society, and knows of some little evil, never heard of before, which he wishes to correct in a distant part of the land. Does he encounter a religious man — he is ready to build a church if it could be built of words, and grows eloquent talking of the goodness of God and the sin of the world, and has a plan for evangelizing the cannibals of New Zealand, and christianizing, forsooth, the natives of China, for he thinks it hard they should "continue heathens and so be lost." Does he overtake a lady of affluence and refinement — there are no limits to his respect for the female sex, no bounds to his politeness, no pains too great for him to serve her. But let him overtake a poor woman of a rainy day, in a lonely road, who really needs his courtesy — he will not lend her his arm or his umbrella, for all his devotion to the female sex. He thinks teachers are not sufficiently paid, but teases a needy young man to take his son to school a little under price, and disputes the bill when rendered. He knows that a young man of fortune lives secretly in the most flagrant debauchery. Our Pharisee treats him with all conceivable courtesy, defends him from small rumors; but when the iniquity is once made public, he is the very loudest in his condemnation, and wonders any one could excuse him. This man will be haughty to his equals, and arrogant to those he deems below him. With all his plans for christianizing China and New Zealand, he takes no pains to instruct and christianize his own family. In spite of his sorrow for the wickedness of the world, and his zeal for the suppression of vice, he can tell the truth so as to deceive, and utter a lie so smoothly that none suspects it to be untrue. Is he to sell you an article — its obvious faults

are explained away, and its secret ones concealed still deeper. Is he to purchase — he finds a score of defects, which he knows exist but in his lying words. When the bargain is made, he tells his fellow-Pharisee how adroitly he deceived, and how great are his gains. This man is fulfilled of emptiness. Yet he is suffered to walk the earth, and eat and drink, and look upon the sun, all hollow as he is.

The Pharisee of politics.— This, also, is a numerous class. He makes great professions of honesty; thinks the country is like to be ruined by want of integrity in high places, and, perhaps, it is so. For his part, he thinks simple honesty, the doing of what one knows to be right, is better than political experience, of which he claims but little; more safe than the eagle eye of statesman-like sagacity, which sees events in their causes and can apply the experience of many centuries to show the action of a particular measure, a sagacity that he cannot pretend to. This Pharisee of politics, when he is out of place, thinks much evil is likely to befall us from the office-holders, enemies of the people; if he is in place, from the office-wanters, most pestilent fellows! Just before the election this precious Pharisee is seized with a great concern lest the people be deceived, the dear people, whom he loves with such vast affection. No distance is too great for him to travel; no stormy night too stormy for him, that he may utter his word in season. Yet all the while he loves the people but as the cat her prey, which she charms with her look of demure innocence, her velvet skin and glittering eyes, till she has seized it in her teeth, and then condescends to sport with its tortures, sharpening her appetite and teasing it to death. There is a large body of men in all political parties,

"who sigh and groan
For public good, and mean their own."

It has always been so, and will always continue so, till men and women become Christian, and then, as pagan Plato tells us, the best and wisest men will take high offices cheerfully, because they involve the most irksome duties of the citizen. The Pharisee of politics is all things to all men (though in a sense somewhat different from the apostle, perhaps), that he may, by any means, gain some to his side. Does he meet a reformer — he has a plan for improving and finishing off the world quite suddenly. Does he fall in with a conservative — our only strength is to stand still. Is he speaking with a wise friend of the people — he would give every poor boy and girl the best education the state could afford, making monopoly of wisdom out of the question. Does he talk with the selfish man of a clique, who cares only for that person girded with his belt — he thinks seven-eighths of the people, including all of the working class, must be left in ignorance beyond hope; as if God made one man all head, and the other all hands. Does he meet a Unitarian — the Pharisee signs no creed, and always believed the Unity; with a Calvinist — he is so Trinitarian he wishes there were four persons in the god-head, to give his faith a test the more difficult. Let the majority of voters, or a third party who can turn the election, ask him to pledge himself to a particular measure — this lover of the people is ready, their "obedient servant," whether it be to make property out of paper, or merchandise out of men. The voice of his electors is to him not the voice of God, which might be misunderstood, but God himself. But when his object is reached, and the place secure, you shall see the demon of ambition that possesses the man

come out into action. This man can stand in the hall of the nation's wisdom, with the Declaration of Independence in one hand, and the Bible, the great charter of freedom, in the other, and justify — not excuse, palliate, and account for — but justify, the greatest wrong man can inflict on man, and attempt to sanction slavery, quoting chapter and verse from the New Testament, and do it as our fathers fought, in the name of "God and their country." He can stand in the centre of a free land, his mouth up to the level of Mason and Dixon's line, and pour forth his eloquent lies, all freedom above the mark, but all slavery below it. He can cry out for the dear people till they think some man of wealth and power watches to destroy them, while he wants authority; but when he has it, ask him to favor the cause of humanity, ask him to aid those few hands which would take hold of the poor man's son in his cabin, and give him an education worthy of a man, a free man; ask him to help those few souls of great faith who perfume heaven's ear with their prayers, and consume their own hearts on the altar, while kindling the reluctant sacrifice for other hearts, so slow to beat; ask him to aid the noblest interests of man, and help bring the kingdom of heaven here in New England,— and where is he? Why, the bubble of a man has blown away. If you could cast his character into a melting-pot, as chemists do their drugs, and apply suitable tests to separate part from part, and so analyze the man, you would find a little wit and less wisdom; a thimble-full of common sense, worn in the fore part of the head and so ready for use at a moment's call; a conscience made up of maxims of expediency and worldly thrift, which conscience he wore on his sleeve to swear by when it might serve his turn.

You would find a little knowledge of history to make use of on the 4th of July and election days; a conviction that there was a selfish principle in man, which might be made active; a large amount of animal cunning, selfishness, and ambition, all worn very bright by constant use. Down farther still in the crucible would be a shapeless lump of faculties he had never used, which, on examination, would contain manliness, justice, integrity, honor, religion, love, and whatever else that makes man divine and immortal. Such is the inventory of this thing which so many worship, and so many would be. Let it also pass to its reward.

The Pharisee of the church.— There was a time when he who called himself a Christian took as it were the prophet's vow, and toil and danger dogged his steps; poverty came like a giant upon him, and death looked ugly at him through the casement as he sat down with his wife and babes. Then to be called a Christian was to be a man, to pray prayers of great resolution and to live in the kingdom of heaven. Now, it means only to be a Protestant or a Catholic, to believe with the Unitarians or the Calvinists. We have lost the right names of things. The Pharisee of the church has a religion for Sunday, but none for the week. He believes all the true things and absurd things ever taught by popular teachers of his sect. To him the Old Testament and the New Testament are just the same — and the Apocrypha he never reads — books to be worshipped and sworn by. He believes most entirely in the law of Moses, and the gospel of the Messiah which annuls that law. They are both "translated out of the original tongues, and appointed to be read in churches." Of course he practices one just as much as the other. His belief has cost him so

much he does nothing but believe, never dreams of living his belief. He has a religion for Sunday, and a face for Sunday, and Sunday books, and Sunday talk; and just as he lays aside his Sunday coat, so he puts by his talk, his books, his face, and his religion. They would be profaned if used on a week-day. He can sit in his pew of a Sunday — wood sitting upon wood — with the demurest countenance and never dream the words of Isaiah, Paul, and Jesus, which are read him, came out of the serene deeps of the soul that is fulfilled of a divine life, and are designed to reach such deeps in other souls, and will reach them if they also live nobly. He can call himself a Christian, and never do anything to bless or comfort his neighbor. The poor pass, and never raise an eye to that impenetrable face. He can hear sermons, and pay for sermons that denounce the sin he daily commits, and thinks he atones for the sin by paying for the sermon. His Sunday prayers are beautiful, out of the psalms and the gospels; but his weekly life, what has it to do with his prayer? How confounded would he be, if heaven should take him in earnest, and grant his request! He would pray that God's name be hallowed, while his life is blasphemy against him. He can say "Thy kingdom come," when if it should come, he would wither up at the sight of so much majesty. The kingdom of God is in the hearts of men; does he wish it there, in his own heart? He prays "Thy will be done," yet never sets a foot forward to do it, nor means to set a foot forward. His only true petition is for daily bread, and this he utters falsely, for all men are included in the true petition, and he asks only for himself. When he says "forgive us as we forgive," he imprecates a curse on himself, most burning and dreadful; for when did he give or

forgive? The only "evil" he prays to be delivered from is worldly trouble. He does not wish to be saved from avarice, peevishness, passion, from false lips, a wicked heart and a life mean and dastardly. He can send Bibles to the heathen on the deck of his ship, and rum, gunpowder, and cast-iron muskets in the hold. The aim of this man is to get the most out of his fellow-mortals, and to do the least for them, at the same time keeping up the phenomena of goodness and religion. To speak somewhat figuratively, he would pursue a wicked calling in a plausible way, under the very windows of heaven, at intervals singing hymns to God, while he debased his image; contriving always to keep so near the walls of the New Jerusalem, that when the destroying flood swept by, he might scramble in at a window, booted and spurred to ride over men, wearing his Sunday face, with his Bible in his hand, to put the Savior to the blush and out-front the justice of Almighty God. But let him pass also; he has his reward. Sentence is pronounced against all that is false. The publicans and the harlots enter into the kingdom of God before that man.

The Pharisee of the pulpit.— The Scribes and Pharisees sat once in Moses' seat; now they go farther up and sit in the seat of the Messiah. The Pharisee of the pulpit is worse than any other class, for he has the faults of all the rest, and is set in a place where even the slightest tarnish of human frailty is a disgrace, all the more disgraceful because contrasted with the spotless vestments of that loftiest spirit that has bestrode the ages, and stands still before us as the highest ideal ever realized on the earth—the measure of a perfect man. If the gold rust, what shall the iron do? The fundamental sin of the Pharisee of the pulpit is

this: he keeps up the form, come what will come of the substance. So he embraces the form when the substance is gone for ever. He might be represented in painting as a man, his hands filled with husks from which the corn has long ago been shelled off, carried away and planted, and has now grown up under God's blessing, produced its thirty or its hundred-fold, and stands ripe for the reaper, waiting the sickle; while hungering crowds come up escaping from shipwreck or wandering in the deserts of sin, and ask an alms, he gives them a husk — only a husk; nothing but a husk. "The hungry flock look up and are not fed," while he blasts with the curses of his church all such as would guide the needy to those fields where there is bread enough and to spare. He wonders at "the perverseness of the age," that will no longer be fed with chaff and husks. He has seen but a single pillar of God's temple, and thinking that is the whole, condemns all such as take delight in its beautiful porches, its many mansions and most holy place. So the fly, who had seen but a nail-head on the dome of St. Peter's, condemned the swallow who flew along its solemn vault, and told the wonders she had seen. Our Pharisee is resolved, God willing, or God not willing, to keep up the form, so he would get into a false position should he dare to think. His thought might not agree with the form, and since he loves the dream of his fathers better than God's truth, he forbids all progress in the form. So he begins by not preaching what he believes, and soon comes to preach what he believes not. These are the men who boast they have Abraham to their father; yet, as it has been said, they come of quite a different stock, which also is ancient and of great renown,

The Pharisee's faith is in the letter, not the spirit. Doubt in his presence that the book of Chronicles and the book of Kings are not perfectly inspired and infallibly true on those very points where they are exactly opposite; doubt that the Infinite God inspired David to denounce his enemies, Peter to slay Ananias, Paul to predict events that never came to pass, and Matthew and Luke, John and Mark, to make historical statements which can never be reconciled — and he sets you down as an infidel, though you keep all the commandments from your youth up, lack nothing, and live as John and Paul prayed they might live. With him the unpardonable sin is to doubt that ecclesiastical doctrine to be true which reason revolts at, and conscience and faith spurn off with loathing. With him the Jews are more than the human race. The Bible is his master, and not his friend. He would not that you should take its poems as its authors took them; nor its narratives for what they are worth, as you take others. He will not allow you to accept the life of Christianity; but you must have its letter also, of which Paul and Jesus said not a word. If you would drink the water of life, you must take likewise the mud it has been filtered through, and drink out of an orthodox urn. You must shut up reason, conscience and common sense when you come to those books, which above all others came out of this triple fountain. To those books he limits divine inspiration, and in his modesty has looked so deep into the counsels of God that he knows the live coal of inspiration has touched no lips but Jewish. No! nor never shall. Does the Pharisee do this from true reverence for the word of God, which was in the beginning, which is life, and which lighteth every man that cometh into the world? Let others judge. But

there is a blindness of the heart to which the fabled darkness of Egypt was noon-day light. That is not the worst scepticism which with the Sadducee denies both angel and resurrection; but that which denies man the right to think, to doubt, to conclude; which hopes no light save from the ashes of the past, and would hide God's truth from the world with the flap of its long robe. We come at truth only by faithful thought, reflection, and contemplation, when the long flashes of light come in upon the soul. But truth and God are always on one side. Ignorance and a blind and barren faith favor only lies and their great patriarch.

The Pharisee of the pulpit talks much of the divine authority of the church and the minister, as if the one was anything more than a body of men and women met for moral and religious improvement, and the other anything but a single man they had asked to teach them, and be an example to the flock, and not "Lord of God's heritage." Had this Pharisee been born in Turkey, he would have been as zealous for the Mahometan church as he now is for the Christian. It is only the accident of birth that has given him the Bible instead of the Koran, the Shastra, the Veda, or the Shu-King. This person has no real faith in man, or he would not fear when he essayed to walk, nor would fancy that while every other science went forward, theology, the queen of science, should be bound hand and foot, and shut up in darkness without sun or star; no faith in Christ, or he would not fear that search and speech should put out the light of life; no faith in God, or he would know that his truth, like virgin gold, comes brighter out of the fire of thought, which burns up only the dross. Yet this Pharisee speaks of God as if he had known the Infinite from his boyhood;

had looked over his shoulder when he laid the foundations of the earth; had entered into all his counsels, and known to the tithing of a hair, how much was given to Moses, how much to Confucius, and how much to Christ, and had seen it written in the book of fate that Christianity as it is now understood was the loftiest religion man could ever know, and all the treasure of the Most High was spent and gone, so that we had nothing more to hope for. Yet the loftiest spirits that have ever lived have blessed the things of God; have adored him in all his works, in the dewdrops and the stars; have felt at times his spirit warm their hearts, and blessed him who was all in all, but bowed their faces down before his presence, and owned they could not by searching find him out unto perfection; have worshipped and loved and prayed, but said no more of the nature and essense of God, for thought has its limits, though presumption it seems has none. The Pharisee speaks of Jesus of Nazareth. How he dwells on his forbearance, his gentleness, but how he forgets that righteous indignation which spoke through him, applied the naked point of God's truth to Pharisees and hypocrites, and sent them back with rousing admonitions. He heeds not the all-embracing love that dwells in him, and wept at sin, and worked with bloody sweat for the oppressed and down-trodden. He speaks of Paul and Peter as if they were masters of the soul, and not merely its teachers and friends. Yet should those flaming apostles start up from the ground in their living holiness, and tread our streets, call things by their right names, and apply Christianity to life, as they once did, and now would do were they here, think you our Pharisee would open his house, like Roman Cornelius or Simon of Tarsus?

There are two divisions of this class of Pharisees: those who do not think — and they are harmless and perhaps useful in their way, like snakes that have no venom, but catch worms and flies — and those who do think. The latter think one thing in their study, and preach a very different thing in their pulpit. In the one place they are free as water, ready to turn any way; in the other, conservative as ice. They fear philosophy should disturb the church as she lies bedridden at home, so they would throw the cobwebs of authority and tradition over the wings of truth, not suffering her with strong pinions to fly in the midst of heaven, and communicate between man and God. They think "you must use a little deceit in the world," and so use not a little. These men speak in public of the inspiration of the Bible, as if it were all inspired with equal infallibility; but what do they think at home? In his study the Testament is a collection of legendary tales, in the pulpit it is the everlasting gospel; if any man shall add to it the seven last plagues shall be added to him, if any one takes from it his name shall be taken from the book of life. If there be a sin in the land, or a score of sins tall as the Anakim which go to and fro in the earth and shake the churches with their tread, let these sins be popular, be loved by the powerful, protected by the affluent; will the Pharisee sound the alarm, lift up the banner, sharpen the sword, and descend to do battle? There shall not a man of them move his tongue; "no, they are dumb dogs, that cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber; yes, they are greedy dogs, that can never have enough." But let there be four or five men in obscure places, not mighty through power, renown, or understanding, or eloquence; let them utter in modesty a thought that

is new, which breathes of freedom or tends directly towards God,— and every Pharisee of the pulpit shall cry out from Cape Sable to the Lake of the Woods, till the land ring again. Doubtless it is heroic thus to fight a single new thought, rather than a score of old sins. Doubtless it is a very Christian zeal thus to pursue obscurity to its retreat, and mediocrity to its littleness, and startle humble piety from her knees, while the Goliath of sin walks with impudent forehead at noon-day in front of their armies, and defiles the living God — a very Christian zeal, which would destroy a modest champion, however true, who, declining the canonical weapons, should bring down the foe and smite off the giant's head. Two persons are mentioned in the Bible who have had many followers: the one is Lot's wife, who perished looking back upon Sodom; the other Demetrius, who feared that "this our craft is in danger to be set at nought."

Such, then, are the Pharisees. We ought to accept whatever is good in them; but their sins should be exposed. Yet in our indignation against the vice, charity should always be kept for the man. There is "a soul of goodness in things evil," even in the Pharisee, for he also is a man. It is somewhat hard to be all that God made us to become; and if a man is so cowardly he will only aim to seem something, he deserves pity, but certainly not scorn or hate. Bad as he appears, there is yet somewhat of goodness left in him, like hope at the bottom of Pandora's box. Fallen though he is, he is yet a man to love and be loved. Above all men is the Pharisee to be pitied. He has grasped at a shadow, and he feels sometimes that he is lost. With many a weary step and many a groan, he has hewn him out broken cisterns that hold no water,

and sits dusty and faint beside them; "a deceived heart has turned him aside," and there is "a lie in his right hand." Meantime the stream of life hard by falls from the rock of ages; its waters flow for all; and when the worn pilgrim stoops to drink, he rises a stronger man and thirsts no more for the hot and polluted fountain of deceit and sin. Further down, men leprous as Naaman may dip and be healed.

While these six classes of Pharisees pursue their wicked way, the path of real manliness and religion opens before each soul of us all. The noblest sons of God have trodden therein, so that no one need wander. Moses, and Jesus, and John, and Paul have gained their salvation by being real men; content to see goodness and God, they found their reward; they blessed the nations of the earth, and entered the kingdom of religious souls. It is not possible for falseness or reality to miss of its due recompense. The net of divine justice sweeps clean to its bottom the ocean of man, and all things that are receive their due. The Pharisee may pass for a Christian, and men may be deceived for a time, but God never. In his impartial balance it is only real goodness that has weight. The Pharisee may keep up the show of religion; but what avails it? Real sorrows come home to that false heart; and when the strong man, tottering, calls on God for more strength, how shall the false man stand? Before the justice of the All-Seeing, where shall he hide? Men have the Pharisee's religion, if they will, and they have his reward, which begins in self-deception, and ends in ashes and dust. They may, if they choose, have the Christian's religion and they have also his reward, which begins in the great resolution of the heart, continues in the action of what is best and most

manly in human nature, and ends in tranquility and rest for the soul, which words are powerless to describe, but which man must feel to know. To each man, as to Hercules, there come two counselors; the one of the flesh, to offer enervating pleasures and unreal joys for the shadow of virtue; the other of the spirit, to demand a life that is lovely, holy, and true. Which will you have? is the question put by Providence to each of us; and the answer is the daily life of the Pharisee or the Christian. Thus it is of a man's own choice that he is cursed or blessed, that he ascends to heaven or goes down to hell.

## VI

## PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY

There are some ages when all seem to look for a great man to come up at God's call, and deliver them from the evils they groan under. Then humanity seems to lie with its forehead in the dust, calling on heaven to send a man to save it. There are times when the powers of the race, though working with their wonted activity, appear so misdirected that little permanent good comes from the efforts of the gifted; times when governments have little regard for the welfare of the subject, when popular forms of religion have lost their hold on the minds of the thoughtful, and the consecrated augurs, while performing the accustomed rites, dare not look one another in the face, lest they laugh in public and disturb the reverence of the people, their own having gone long before. Times there are when the popular religion does not satisfy the hunger and thirst of the people themselves. Then mental energy seems of little value, save to disclose and chronicle the sadness of the times. No great works of deep and wide utility are then undertaken for existing or future generations. Original works of art are not sculptured out of new thought. Men fall back on the achievements of their fathers, imitate and reproduce them, but take no steps in any direction into the untrodden infinite. Though wealth and selfishness pile up their marble and mortar as never before, yet the chisel, the pencil, and the pen, are prostituted to imitation. The artist does not travel beyond the actual.

At such times the rich are wealthy only to be luxurious, and dissolve the mind in the lusts of the flesh. The cultivated have skill and taste only to mock, openly or in secret, at the forms of religion, and its substance also; to devise new pleasures for themselves; pursue the study of some abortive science, some costly game, or dazzling art. When the people suffer for water and bread, the king digs fish-pools, that his parasites may fare on lampreys of unnatural size. Then the poor are trodden down into the dust. The weak bear the burden of the strong, and they who do all the work of the world, who spin, and weave, and delve, and drudge, who build the palace, and supply the feast, are the only men that go hungry and bare, live uncared for, and when they die are huddled into the dirt, with none to say God bless you. Such periods have occurred several times in the world's history.

At these times man stands in frightful contrast with nature. He is dissatisfied, ill-fed, and poorly clad; while all nature through there is not an animal, from the mite to the mammoth, but his wants are met and his peace secured by the great Author of all. Man knows not whom to trust, while the little creature that lives its brief moment in the dew-drop, which hangs on the violet's petal, enjoys perfect tranquillity so long as its little life runs on. Man is in doubt, distress, perpetual trouble; afraid to go forward, lest he go wrong; fearful of standing still, lest he fall; while the meanest worm that crawls under his feet is all and enjoys all its nature allows, and the stars overhead go smoothly as ever on their way.

At such times, men call for a great man, who can put himself at the head of their race, and lead them on, free from their troubles. There is a feeling in the heart of

us all that as sin came by man, and death by sin, so by man, under providence, must come also salvation from that sin, and resurrection from that death. We feel, all of us, that for every wrong there is a right somewhere, had we but the skill to find it. This call for a great man is sometimes long and loud before he comes, for he comes not of man's calling but of God's appointment.

This was the state of mankind many centuries ago, before Jesus was born at Bethlehem. Scarce ever had there been an age when a deliverer was more needed. The world was full of riches. Wealth flowed into the cities, a Pactolian tide. Fleets swam the ocean. The fields were full of cattle and corn. The high-piled warehouses at Alexandria and Corinth groaned with the munitions of luxury, the product of skillful hands. Delicate women, the corrupted and the corrupters of the world's metropolis, scarce veiled their limbs in garments of gossamer, fine as woven winds. Metals and precious stones vied with each other to render loveliness more lovely, and beauty more attractive, or oftener to stimulate a jaded taste, and whip the senses to their work. Nature, with that exquisite irony men admire but cannot imitate, used the virgin luster of the gem to reveal more plain the moral ugliness of such as wore the gaud. The very marble seemed animate to bud and blossom into palace and temple. But alas for man in those days! The strong have always known one part of their duty, how to take care of themselves; and so have laid burdens on weak men's shoulders; but the more difficult part, how to take care of the weak, their natural clients, they neither knew nor practiced so well even as now. If the history of the strong is ever written, as such, it will be the record of rapine and

murder from Cain to Cush, from Nimrod to Napoleon.

In that age men cried for a great man, and wonderful to tell, the prophetic spirit of human nature, which detects events in their causes, and by its profound faith in the invisible sees both the cloud and the star before they come up to the horizon, foretold the advent of such a man. "An ancient and settled opinion," says a Roman writer, "had spread over all the east, that it was fated at this time for some one to arise out of Judea, and rule the world." We find this expectation in many shapes, psalm and song, poem and prophecy. We sometimes say this prediction was miraculous, while it appears rather as the natural forecast of hearts which believe God has a remedy for each disease, and balm for every wound. The expectation of relief is deep and certain with such, just as the evil is imminent and dreadful. If it have lasted long and spread wide, men only look for a greater man. This fact shows how deep in the soul lies that religious element which sees clearest in the dark, when understanding cannot see at all; which hopes most when there is least ground, but most need of hope. But men go too far in their expectations. Their faith stimulates their fancy, which foretells what the deliverer shall be. In this men are always mistaken. Heaven has endowed the race of men with but little invention. So in those times of trouble they look back to the last peril, and hope for a redeemer like him they had before; greater it may be, but always of the same kind. This same poverty of invention, and habit of thinking the future must reproduce the past, appears in all human calculations. If some one had told the amanuensis of Julius Cæsar that in eighteen centuries men would be able in a few hours to make a perfect copy of a book twenty times

as great as all his master's commentaries and history he would pronounce it impossible, for he could think of none but the old method of a scribe forming each word with a pen letter by letter, never anticipating the modern way of printing with a rolling press driven by steam. So if some one had told Joab that two thousand years after his day men in war would kill one another with a missile half an ounce in weight, and would send it three or four hundred yards, driving it through a shirt of mail or a plough-share of iron, he would think but of a common bow and arrows, and say it cannot be. What would Zeuxis have thought of a portrait made in thirty seconds, exact as nature, penciled by the sun himself? Now men make mistakes in their expectation of a deliverer. The Jews were once raised to great power by David, and again rescued from distress and restored from exile by Cyrus, a great conqueror and a just man. Therefore the next time they fell into trouble, they expected another king like David or Cyrus, who should come, perhaps in the clouds, with a great army to do much more than either David or Cyrus had done. This was the current expectation, that when the Redeemer came he should be a great general, commander of an army, king of the Jews. He was to restore the exiles, defeat their foes, and revive the old theocracy, to which other nations should be subservient.

Their deliverer comes; but instead of a noisy general, a king begirt with the pomp of oriental royalty, there appears one of the lowliest of men. His kingdom was of truth, and therefore not of this world. He drew no sword, uttered no word of violence, did not complain when persecuted, but took it patiently; did not exact a tooth for a tooth, nor pay a blow with a

blow, but loved men who hated him. This conqueror, who was to come with great pomp, perhaps in the clouds, with an army numerous as the locusts, at whose every word kingdoms were to shake, appears, born in a stable, of the humblest extraction, the companion of fishermen, living in a town whose inhabitants were so wicked men thought nothing good could come of it. The means he brought for the salvation of his race were quite as surprising as the Savior himself; not armies on earth or in heaven, not even new tables of laws; but a few plain directions, copied out from the primitive and eternal scripture God wrote in the heart of man — the true protevangelium — love man; love God; resist not evil; ask and receive. These were the weapons with which to pluck the oppressor down from his throne; to destroy the conquerors of the world; dislodge sin from high places and low places; uplift the degraded, and give weary and desperate human nature a fresh start! How disappointed men would have looked, could it have been made clear to them that this was now the only deliverer Heaven was sending to their rescue. But this could not be; their recollection of past deliverance, and their prejudice of the future based on this recollection, blinded their eyes. They said, "This is not he; when the Christ cometh, no man shall know whence he is. But we know this is the Nazarene carpenter, the son of Joseph and Mary." Men treated this greatest of saviors as his humble brothers had always been treated. Even his disciples were not faithful; one betrayed him with a kiss; the rest forsook him and fled; his enemies put him to death, adding ignominy to their torture, and little thinking this was the most effectual way to bring about the end he sought, and scatter the seed whence the whole race was to be blessed for many a thousand years.

There is scarce anything in nature more astonishing to a reflective mind than the influence of one man's thought and feeling over another, and on thousands of his fellows. There are few voices in the world, but many echoes, and so the history of the world is chiefly the rise and progress of the thoughts and feelings of a few great men. Let a man's outward position be what it may, that of a slave or a king, or an apparent idler in a busy metropolis, if he have more wisdom, love, and religion than any of his fellow-mortals, their mind, heart, and soul are put in motion, even against their will and they cannot stand where they stood before, though they close their eyes never so stiffly. The general rule holds doubly strong in this particular case. This poor Galilean peasant, son of the humblest people, born in an ox's crib, who at his best estate had not where to lay his head; who passed for a fanatic with his townsmen, and even with his brothers — children of the same parents — who was reckoned a lunatic, a very madman or counted as one possessed of a devil by grave, respectable folk about Jerusalem; who was put to death as a rebel and blasphemer, at the instance of Pharisees, the high-priest, and other sacerdotal functionaries — he stirred men's mind, heart, and soul as none before nor since has done, and produced a revolution in human affairs which is even now greater than all other revolutions, though it has hitherto done but a little of its work.

He looked trustfully up to the Father of all. Because he was faithful God inspired him till his judgment, in religious matters, seems to have become certain as instinct, infallible as the law of gravitation, and his will irresistible because it was no longer partial, but God's will flowing through him. He gave voice

to the new thought which streamed on him, asking no questions whether Moses or Solomon in old time had thought as he, nor whether Gamaliel and Herod would vouch for the doctrine now. He felt that in him was something greater than Moses or Solomon, and he did not, as many have done, dishonor the greater to make a solemn mockery of serving the less. He spoke what he felt, fearless as truth. He lived in blameless obedience to his sentiment and his principle. With him there was no great gulf between thought and action, duty and life. If he saw sin in the land — and when or where could he look and not see that last of the giants? — he gave warning to all who would listen. Before the single eye of this man, still a youth, the reverend veils fell off from antiquated falsehood; the looped and windowed livery of Abraham dropped from recreant limbs, and the child of the devil stood there, naked but not unshamed. He saw that blind men, the leaders and the led, were hastening to the same ditch. Well might he weep for the slain of his people, and cry, "Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" Few heard his cries, for it seems fated that when the son of man comes he shall *not* find faith on the earth. Pity alike for the oppressed and the oppressor — and a boundless love, even for the unthankful and the merciless — burned in his breast, and shed their light and warmth wherever he turned his face. His thought was heavenly; his life only revealed his thought. His soul appeared in his words, on which multitudes were fed. Prejudice itself confessed, "never man spake like this." His feeling and his thought assumed a form more beauteous still, and a whole divine life was wrought out on the earth, and stands there yet, the imperishable type of human achievements, the despair of the super-

stitious, but the way, the truth, and the life to holy souls. His word of doctrine was uttered gently as the invisible dew comes down on the rose of Engaddi, but it told as if a thunderbolt smote the globe. It brought fire and sword to the dwelling-place of hoary sin. Truth sweeps clean off every refuge of lies, that she may do her entire work.

A few instances show how these words wrought in the world. The sons of Zebedee were so ambitious they would arrogate to themselves the first place in the new kingdom, thinking it a realm where selfishness should hold dominion,— so bloody-minded they would call down fire from heaven to burn up such men as would not receive the teacher. But the spirit of gentleness subdues the selfish passion, and the son of thunder becomes the gentle John, who says only, "Little children, love one another." This same word passes into Simon Peter also, the crafty, subtle, hasty, selfish son of Jonas; the first to declare the Christ, the first to promise fidelity, but the first likewise to deny him, and the first to return to his fishing. It carries this disciple — though perhaps never wholly regenerated — all over the eastern world; and he who had shrunk from the fear of persecution now glories therein, and counts it all joy when he falls into trouble on account of the word. With Joseph of Arimathea, "an honorable counselor," and Nicodemus, "a ruler of the Jews," the matter took another turn. We never hear of them in the history of trial. They slunk back into the synagogue, it may be; wore garments long as before, and phylacteries of the broadest; were called of men "rabbi," "sound, honorable men, who knew what they were about," "men not to be taken in." It is not of such men God makes reformers, apostles, prophets. It

is not for such pusillanimous characters to plunge into the cold, hard stream of truth, as it breaks out of the mountain and falls from the rock of ages. They wait till the stream widens to a river, the river expands its accumulated waters to a lake, quiet as a mirror. Then they confide themselves in their delicate and trim-wrought skiff to its silvery bosom, to be wafted by gentle winds into a quiet haven of repose. Such men do not take up truth when she has fallen by the wayside. It might grieve their friends. It would compromise their interests, would not allow them to take their ease in their inn, for such they regard their station in the world. Besides, the thing was new. How could Joseph and Nicodemus foretell it would prevail? It might lead to disturbance; its friends fall into trouble. The kingdom of heaven offered no safe "investment" for ease and reputation, as now. Doubtless there were in Jerusalem great questionings of heart among Pharisees and respectable men, scribes and doctors of the law, when they heard of the new teacher and his doctrine so deep and plain. There must have been a severe struggle in many bosoms, between the conviction of duty and social sympathies which bound the man to what was most cherished by flesh and blood.

The beautiful gospel found few adherents and little toleration with men learned in the law, burdened with its minute intricacies, devoted to the mighty consideration of small particulars. But the true disciples of the inward life felt the word, which others only listened for, and they could not hush up the matter. It would not be still. So they took up the ark of truth where Jesus set it down, and bore it on. They periled their lives. They left all — comfort, friends, home, wife, the embraces of their children — the most

precious comfort the poor man gets out of the cold, hard world; they went naked and hungry; were stoned and spit upon; scourged in the synagogues; separated from the company of the sons of Abraham; called the vilest of names; counted as the offscouring of the world. But it did them good. This was the sifting Satan gave the disciples, and the chaff went its way, as chaff always does; but the seed-wheat fell into good ground, and now nations are filled with bread which comes of the apostles' sowing and watering, and God giving the increase.

To some men the spread of Christianity in two centuries appears wonderful. To others it is the most natural thing in the world. It could not help spreading. Things most needful to all are the easiest to comprehend, the world over. Thus every savage in Othaheite knows there is a God; while only four or five men in Christendom understand his nature, essence, personality, and "know all about him!" Thus while the great work of a modern scholar, which explains the laws of the material heavens, has never probably been mastered by three hundred persons, and perhaps there is not now on earth half that number who can read and understand it without further preparation, the gospel, the word of Jesus, which sets forth the laws of the soul, can be understood by any pious girl fourteen years old, of ordinary intelligence, with no special preparation at all, and still forms the daily bread and very life of whole millions of men.

Primitive Cristianity was a very simple thing, apart from the individual errors connected with it; two great speculative maxims set forth its essential doctrines, "Love man," and "Love God." It had also two great practical maxims, which grew out of the speculative,

"we that are strong ought to bear the burdens of the weak," and "we must give good for evil." These maxims lay at the bottom of the apostles' minds and the top of their hearts. These explain their conduct; account for their courage; give us the reason of their faith, their strength, their success. The proclaimers of these maxims set forth the life of a man in perfect conformity therewith. If their own practice fell short of their preaching — which sometimes happens spite of their zeal — there was the measure of a perfect man to which they had not attained, but which lay in their future progress. Other matters which they preached, that there was one God, and that the soul never dies, were known well enough before, and old heathens, in centuries gone by, had taught these doctrines quite as distinctly as the apostles, and the latter much more plainly than the Gospels. These new teachers had certain other doctrines peculiar to themselves, which hindered the course of truth more than they helped it, and which have perished with their authors.

No wonder the apostles prevailed with such doctrines, set off or recommended by a life, which — notwithstanding occasional errors — was single-hearted, lofty, full of self-denial and sincere manliness. "All men are brothers," said the apostles; "their duty is to keep the law God wrote eternally on the heart, to keep this without fear." The forms and rites they made use of, their love-feasts and Lord's suppers, their baptismal and funeral ceremonies, were things indifferent, of no value save only as helps. Like the cloak Paul left behind at Troas, and the fishing-coat of Simon Peter, they were to serve their turn, and then be laid aside. They were no more to be perpetual than the sheepskins and goat-skins which likwise have apostolical au-

thority in favor of their use. In an age of many forms Christianity fell in with the times. It wore a Jewish dress at Jerusalem, and a Grecian costume at Thessalonica. It became all things to all men. Some rites of the early church seem as absurd as many of the later; but all had a meaning once, or they would not have been. Men of New England would scarce be willing to worship as Barnabas and Clement did; nor could Bartholomew and Philip be satisfied with our simpler form, it is possible. Each age of the world has its own way, which the next smiles at as ridiculous. Still, the four maxims mentioned above give the spirit of primitive Christianity, the life of the apostles' life.

It is not marvelous these men were reckoned unsafe persons. Nothing in the world is so dangerous and untractable, in a false state of society, as one who loves man and God. You cannot silence him by threat or torture, nor scare him with any fear. Set in the stocks to-day, he harangues men in public to-morrow. "Herod will kill thee," says one. "Go and tell that fox, behold, I cast out devils and deceivers to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected," is the reply. Burn or behead such men, and out of their blood, and out of their ashes there spring up others, who defy you to count them, and say, "Come, kill us, if you list, we shall never be silent." Love begets love the world over, and martyrdom makes converts, certain as steel sparks, when smitten against the flint. If a fire is to burn in the woods, let it be blown upon.

Primitive Christianity did not owe its spread to the address of its early converts. They boast of this fact. The apostles, who held these four maxims, were plain men; very rough Galilean fishermen; rude in speech,

and not over-courteous in address, if we may credit the epistles of Paul and James. They had incorrect notions in many points, which both we and they deem vital. Some of them — perhaps all — expected a resurrection of the body; others, that the Jewish law, with its burdensome rites and ostentatious ceremonies, was to be perpetual, binding on all Christians and the human race. Some fancied — as it appears — that Jesus had expiated the sins of all mankind; others, that he had existed before he was born into this world. These were doctrines of Jewish and heathen parentage. All of these men — so far as the New Testament enables us to judge — looked for the visible return of Jesus to the earth with clouds and great glory, and expected the destruction of the world and that in a very few years. These facts are very plain to all who will read the epistles and gospels, in spite of the dust which interpreters cast in the eyes of common sense. Some apocryphal works, perhaps older than the canonical, certainly accepted as authentic in some of the early churches, relate the strangest marvels about the doings and sayings of Jesus, designing thereby to exhibit the greatness of his character, while they show how little that was understood. We all know what the canonical writings contain on this head, and from these two sources can derive much information as to the state of opinion among the apostles and their immediate successors. Simon Peter, notwithstanding his visions, seems always to have been in bondage to the law of sin and death, if we may trust Paul's statement in the epistle; James — if the letter be his — had irriational notions on some points; and even Paul, the largest-minded of them all, was not disposed to allow women the rights which reason

claims for the last creation of God. But what if these men were often mistaken, and sometimes on matters of great moment? We need not deny the fact, for the sake of an artificial theory snatched out of the air. It is not expedient to lie in behalf of truth, however common it has been. We need not fear Christianity shall fall because Christians were mistaken in any age. Were human beings ever free from errors of opinion, imperfection in action? Has the nature of things changed, and did the earth bring forth superhuman men in the first century? It does not appear. But underneath these mistakes, errors, follies of the primitive Christians there beat the noble heart of religious love, which sent life into their every limb. These maxims they had learned from Jesus, seen exhibited in his life, found written on their heart — these did the work, spite of the imperfection and passions of the apostles, Paul withstanding Peter to the face, and predicting events that never came to pass. The nobleness of the heart found its way up to the head, and neutralized errors of thought.

By means of these causes the doctrines spread. The expecting people felt their deliverer had come, and welcomed the glad tidings. Each year brought new converts to the work, and the zeal of the Christian burnt brighter with his success. Paul undertook many missions, and the word of God grew mightily and prevailed. In him we see a striking instance of the power of real Christianity to recast the character. We cannot forbear to dwell a moment on the theme.

There are two classes of men who come to religion. Some seem to be born spiritual. They are aboriginal

saints, natives of heaven, whom accident has stranded on the earth; men of few passions, of no tendency to violence, anger, or excess in anything. They do not hesitate between right and wrong, but go the true way as naturally as the bird takes to the air and the fish to the water, because it is their natural element and they cannot help it. Reason and religion seem to be coeval. Their Christianity and their consciousness are of the same date. Desire and duty, putting in the warp and woof, weave harmoniously, like sisters, the many-colored web of life. To these men life is easy; it is not that long warfare which it is to so many. It costs them nothing to be good. Their desires are dutiful, their duties desirable. They have no virtue which implies struggle. They are goodness all over, which is the harmony of all the powers. Their action is their repose; their religion their self-indulgence; their daily life the most perfect worship. Say what we will of the world, these men, who are angels born, are happier in their lot than such as are only angels bred, whose religion is not a matter of birth, but of hard earnings. They start, in their flight to heaven, from an eminence which other souls find it hard to attain, and roll down, down like the stone of Sisyphus many times in the perilous ascent. Paul was not born of this nobility of heaven.

The other class are men of will; hard, iron men, who have passions, and doubts, and fears, and a whole legion of appetites in their bosom, but yet come armed with a strong sense of duty, a masculine intellect, a tendency upwards towards God, a great heart of flesh, contracting and expanding between self-love and love of man. These are the men who

feel the puzzle of the world, and are taken with its fever; stout-hearted, strong-headed men, who love strongly and hate with violence, and do with their might whatever they do at all. These are the men that make the heroes of the world. They break the way in philosophy and science; they found colonies, lead armies, make laws, construct systems of theology, form sects in the church; a yoke of iron will not hold them, nor that of public opinion, more difficult to break. When these men become religious they are beautiful as angels. The fire of God falls on them; it consumes their dross; the uncorrupted gold remains in virgin purity. Once filled with religion, their zeal never cools. You shall not daunt them with the hissing of the great and learned, nor scare them with the roar of the street or the armies of a king. To these men the axe of the headsman, yes, all the tortures malice can devise or tyranny inflict, are as nothing. The resolute soul puts down the flesh and finds in embers a bed of roses. To this class belonged Paul, a man evidently quick to see, stern to resolve, and immovable in executing; a man of iron will, that nothing could break down; of strong moral sense, deep religious faith, and a singular greatness of heart towards his fellow-men; but yet furnished with an overpowering energy of passion, which might warp his moral sense, his faith, his philanthropy aside, and make him a bigot, the slave of superstition, a fanatic, perverse as Loyola and desperate as Saint Dominic. In him the good and the evil of the old dispensation seemed to culminate; for he had all the piety of David, which charms us in the shepherd-psalm; all the diabolic hatred which appears in the curses of that king, who was so wondrous a mixture of heaven,

earth, and hell. In addition to this natural character, Paul received a Jewish education at the feet of Gamaliel — a Pharisee of the straightest sect. His earlier life at Tarsus brought him in contact with the Greeks, intensifying his bigotry for the time, but yet facilitating his escape from the shackles of a worn-out ritual.

It is easy to see how the doctrines of Jesus would strike the young Pharisee, fresh from the study of the law. Christianity set aside all he valued most; struck down the law, held the prophets of small account, put off the ritual, declared the temple no better to pray in than a fisher's boat; affirmed all men to be brothers, thus denying the merit of descent from Abraham, and declared if any one loved God and man he should have treasures in heaven, and inspiration while on earth. No wonder the old Pharisee, whose soul was caught in the letter; no wonder the young Pharisee, accustomed to swear by the old, felt pricked in their hearts, and gnashed their teeth. It is a hard thing, no doubt, for men who count themselves children of Abraham to be proved children of a very different stock, dutiful sons of the great father of lies. It is easy to fancy what Paul would think of the arrogance of the new teacher, to call himself greater than Solomon or Jonah, and profess to see deeper down than the law ever went; what of the presumption of the disciples, "unlearned and ignorant men," to pretend to teach doctrines wiser than Moses, and when they could not read the letter of his word. It is no wonder he breathed out fire and slaughter, and "persecuted them even unto strange cities." But it is dangerous to go too far in pursuit of heretical game. Men sometimes rouse up a lion when they look for

a linnet, and the eater is himself eaten. But Paul had a good conscience in this. He believed what came of the fathers, never applying common sense to his theology, nor asking if these things be so. He thought he did God service by debasing his image and helping to stone Stephen. At length he becomes a Christian in thought. We know not how the change took place. Perhaps he thought it miraculous, for in common with most of his times and country he never drew a sharp line between the common and the supernatural. He seems often to have dwelt in that cloudy land where all things have a strange and marvelous aspect.

A later contemporary of Paul relates some of the most remarkable events, as he deemed them, which occurred in those times. He gives occasionally minute details of the superstition, crime, and madness of the emperors of Rome. But the most remarkable event which occurred for some centuries after Tiberius, he never speaks of. Probably he knew nothing of it. Had he heard thereof it would have seemed inconsiderable to this chronicler of imperial follies. But the journey from Jerusalem to Damascus of a young man named Saul, if we regard its cause and its consequences, was a more wonderful event than the world saw for the next thousand years. Men thought little of its result at the time. The gossips of the day had specious reasons, no doubt, for Paul's sudden conversion, and said he was disappointed of preferment in the old state of things, and hoped for an easy living in the new; that he loved the distinction and notoriety the change would give him, and hoped also for the loaves and fishes, then so abundant in the new church. Doubtless there were

some who said, "Paul is beside himself." But King Herod Agrippa took no notice of the matter. He was too busy with his dreams of ambition and lust to heed what befell a tent-maker from a Cilician city, in his journey from Jerusalem to Damascus. Yet from that time the history of the world turns on this point. If Paul had not been raised up by the Almighty for this very work, so to say, who shall tell us how long Christianity would have lain concealed under the Jewish prejudice of its earlier disciples? These things are for no mortal to discover. But certain it is that Paul found the Christians an obscure Jewish sect, full of zeal and love, but narrow and bigoted, in bondage to the letter of old Hebrew institutions; but he left them a powerful band in all great cities, free men by the law of the spirit of life. It seems doubtful that Peter, James, or John would have given Christianity its natural form of universal faith.

There must have been a desperate struggle before Paul became a Christian. He must renounce all the prejudices of the Jew and the Pharisee; and the idols of the tribe and the den are the last a man gives up. He must be abandoned by his friends, the wise, the learned, the venerable. Few men know of the battle between new convictions and old social sympathies; but it is of the severest character — a war of extermination. He must condemn all his past conduct, lose the reputation of consistency, leave all the comforts of society, all chance of reputation among men — be counted as a thief and murderer, perhaps be put to death. But the truth conquered. We think it easy to decide as Paul, forgetting that many things become plain after the result which were dim and doubtful before.

When the young man had decided in favor of Christianity he would require some instruction in matters pertaining to the heavenly doctrine, we should suppose,— taking the popular views of Christianity, which make it an historical thing, depending on personal authority or eye-witness and external events, as the only possible proof of internal truths. He would go and sit down with the twelve and listen to their talk, and learn of all the miracles; how Jesus raised the young man, the maiden, called Lazarus from the tomb; how he changed the water into wine, and fed the five thousand; he would go to Martha and Mary to learn the recondite doctrine of the Savior; to the mother of Jesus, to inquire about his birth of the Holy Spirit. But the thing went different. He did not go to Peter, the chief apostle; nor to John, the beloved disciple; nor James, the Lord's brother. "I conferred not with flesh and blood," says the new convert, "neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia." Three years afterwards, for the first time, he had an interview with Peter and James. Fourteen years later he went up to Jerusalem to compare notes, as it were, with those "who seemed to be somewhat." They could tell him nothing new. At last — many years after the commencement of his active ministry — James, Peter, and John give him the right hand of their fellowship. Paul, it seems, had heard of the great doctrines of Jesus, and out of their principles developed his scheme of Christianity — not a very difficult task, one would fancy, for a plain man who reckoned Christianity was love of man and love of God. In those days the gospels were not written, nor yet the epistles. Christianity had no history, except

that Jesus lived, preached, was crucified, and appeared after his crucifixion. Therefore the gospel Paul preached might well enough be different from those now in our hands. Certainly Paul never mentions a miracle of Jesus; says nothing of his super-human birth. Had he known of these things, a man of his strong love of the marvelous would scarcely be silent.

In him primitive Christianity appears to the greatest advantage. It shone in his heart like the rising sun chasing away the mist and clouds of night. His prejudices went first; his passions next. Soon he is on foot, journeying the world over to proclaim the faith, which once he destroyed. Where are his bigotry, prejudice, hatred, his idols of the tribe and the den? The flame of religion has consumed them all. Forth he goes to the work; the strong passion, the unconquerable will, are now directed in the same channel with his love of man. His mighty soul wars with heathenism, declaring an idol is nothing; with Judaism, to announce that the law has passed away; with folly and sin, to declare them of the devil, and lead men to truth and peace. The resolute apostle goes flaming forth in his ministry. A soul more robust, great-hearted, and manly, does not appear in history, for some centuries at least. Danger is nothing; persecution is nothing. It only puts the keener edge on his well-tempered spirit. He is content and joyful at bearing all the reproaches man can lay on him. There was nothing sham in Paul. He felt what he said, which is common enough. He lived what he felt, which is not so common. What wonder that such a man made converts, overcame violence, and helped the truth to triumph? It were wonderful if he had not. Take away the life and influence of Paul, the

Christian world is a different thing; we cannot tell what it would have been. Under his hands, and those of his coadjutors, the new faith spreads from heart to heart, till many thousands own the name, and amid all the persecution that follows the pious of the earth celebrate such a jubilee as the sun never saw before.

However, it was not among the great and refined, but the low and the rude, that the faith found its early confessors. Men came up faint and hungry, from the highways and hedges of society, to eat the bread of life at God's table. They ate and were filled. Here it is that all religions take their rise. The sublime faith of the Hebrews began in a horde of slaves. The Christian has a carpenter for its revealer; fishermen for its first disciples; a tent-maker for its chief apostle. Yet these men could stand before king's courts — and Felix trembled at Paul's reasoning. Yes, the world trembled at such reasoning. And when whole multitudes gave in their adhesion; when the common means of tyranny, prisons, racks, and the cross, failed to repress "this detestable superstition," as ill-natured Tacitus calls it; but when two thousand men and women, delicate maidens, and men newly married, come to the Prætor and say, "We are Christians all; kill us if you will; we cannot change" — then for the first time official persons begin to look into the matter, and inquire for the cause which makes women heroines, and young men martyrs. There are always enough to join any folly because it is new. But when the headsman's axe gleams under his apron, or slaves erect a score of crosses in the market-place, and men see the mangled limbs of brothers, fathers, and sons huddled into bloody sacks, or thrown to the dogs, it requires some heart to bear up, accept a new faith, and renounce mortal life.

It is sometimes asked, what made so many converts to Christianity under such fearful circumstances? The answer depends on the man. Most men apply the universal solvent, and call it a miracle — an overstepping of the laws of mind. The apostles had miraculous authority; Peter had miraculous revelations; Paul a miraculous conversion; both visions, and other miraculous assistance all their life. That they taught by miracles. But what could it be? The *authority* of the teachers? The authority of a Jewish peasant would not have passed for much at Ephesus or Alexandria, at Lycaonia or Rome. Were they infallibly inspired, so that they could not err in doctrine or practice? Thus it has been taught. But their opponents did not believe it; their friends knew nothing of it, or there had been no sharp dissension between Paul and Barnabas, nor any disagreement of Paul with Peter. They themselves seemed never to have dreamed of such an infallibility, or they would have changed their plans and doctrine as Peter did; nor need instruction as Titus, Timothy, and all the primitive teachers, to whom James sent the circular epistle of the first synod. If they had believed themselves infallibly inspired, they would not assemble a council of all to decide what each infallible person could determine as well as all the spirits and angels together. Still less could any discussion arise among the apostles as to the course to be pursued. Was it their learning that gave them success? They could not even interpret the psalms without making the most obvious mistakes, as any one may see who reads the book of Acts. Was it their *eloquence*, their miraculous gift of tongues? What was the eloquence of Peter or James, when Paul, their chief apostle, was

weak in bodily presence and contemptible in speech? No; it was none of these things. They had somewhat more convincing than authority, wiser than learning, more persuasive than eloquence. Men *felt* the doctrine was true and divine. They saw its truth and divinity mirrored in the life of these rough men; they heard the voice of God in their own hearts say, it is true. They tried it by the standard God has placed in the heart, and it stood the test. They saw the effect it had on Christians themselves, and said, "Here at least is something divine, for men do not gather grapes of thorns." When men came out from hearing Peter or Paul set forth the Christian doctrine and apply it to life, they did not say, "What a moving speaker; how beautifully he 'divides the word;' how he mixes the light of the sun, and the roar of torrents, and the sublimity of the stars, as it were, in his speech; what a melting voice; what graceful gestures; what beautiful similes gathered from all the arts, sciences, poetry, and nature herself!" It was not with such reflections they entertained their journey home. They said, "What shall we do to be saved?"

Primitive Christianity was a wonderful element, as it came into the world. Like a two-edged sword, it cut down through all the follies and falseness of four thousand years. It acknowledged what was good and true in all systems, and sought to show its own agreement with goodness and truth, wherever found. It told men what they were. It bade them hope, look upon the light, and aspire after the most noble end — to be complete men, to be reconciled to the will of God and so become one with him. It gave the world assurance of a man, by showing one whose life was beautiful as his doctrine, and that combined all the excellence of all

former teachers, and went before the world thousands of years. It told men there was one God, who had made of one blood all the nations of the earth, and was a Father to each man. It showed that all men are brothers. Believing in these doctrines; seeing the greatness of man's nature in the very ruin sin had wrought; filled with the beauty of a good life, the comforting thought that God is always near, and ready to help — no wonder men felt moved in their heart. The life of the apostles and early Christians, the self-denial they practiced, their readiness to endure persecution, their love one for the other, beautifully enforced the words of truth and love.

One of the early champions of the faith appeals in triumph to the excellence of Christians, which even Julian of a later day was forced to confess. You know the Christians soon as you see them, he says; they are not found in taverns, nor places of infamous resort; they neither game, nor lie, nor steal, attend the baths or the theaters; they are not selfish, but loving. The multitude looked on, at first, to see "whereunto the thing would grow." They saw and said, "See how these Christians love one another, how the new religion takes down the selfishness of the proud, makes avarice charitable, and the voluptuary self-denying."

This new spirit of piety, of love to man and love to God, the active application of the great Christian maxims to life, led to a manly religion; not to the pale-faced pietism which hangs its head on Sundays, and does nothing but whine out its sentimental cant on week-days, in hopes to make this driveling pass current for real manly excellence. No; it led to a noble, upright frame of mind, heart, and soul, and in this way it conquered the world. The first apostles of Christianity

were persuasive through the power of truth. They told what they had felt. They had been under the law, and knew its thraldom; they had escaped from the iron furnace, and could teach others the way. No doubt, the wisest of them was in darkness on many points. Their general ignorance, in the eyes of the scholar, must have stood in strange contrast with their clear view of religious truth. It seems, as Paul says, that God had chosen the foolish and the weak to confound the mighty and the wise. Now we have accomplished scholars skilled in all the lore of the world, accomplished orators; but who does the work of Paul and Timothy? Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings praise was perfected; out of the mouth of clerks and orators what do we get? Well said Jeremiah, "The prophets shall become wind and the word not be in them."

If we come from the days of the apostles to their successors, and still later, we find the errors of the first teachers have become magnified; the truth of Christianity is dim; men had wandered further from that great light God sent into the world. The errors of the pagans, the Jews, the errors of obstinate men, who loved to rule God's heritage better than to be ensamples unto the flock, had worked their way. The same freedom did not prevail as before. The word of God had become a letter; men looked back, not forward. Superstition came into the church. The rites of Christianity — its accidents, not its substance — held an undue place; asceticism was esteemed more than hitherto. The body began to be reckoned unholy; Christ regarded as a God, not a man living as God commands. Then the priest was separated from the people, and a flood of evils came upon the church, and

accomplished what persecution, with her headsmen and her armies, never could effect. Christianity was grossly corrupted long before it ascended the throne of the world. But for this corruption it would have found no place in the court of Rome or Byzantium. Still, in the writings of early Christians, of Tertullian and Cyprian, for example, we find a real living spirit, spite of the superstition, bigotry, and falseness too obvious in the men. They spake because they had somewhat to say, and were earnest in their speech. You come down from the writings of Seneca to Cyprian, you miss the elegant speech, the wonderful mastery over language, and the stores of beautiful imagery with which that hard bombastic Roman sets off his thought. But in the Christian you find an earnestness and a love of man which the Roman had not, and a fervent piety, to which he made no pretension. But alas, for the superstition of the bishop, his austerity and unchristian doctrines! It remains doubful whether an enlightened man, who had attained a considerable growth in religious excellence, would not justly have preferred the religion of Seneca to that of Cyprian; but there is no doubt such an one would have accepted with joyful faith the religion of Jesus — the primitive Christianity undefiled by men. To come down from the Christianity of Christ to the religion popularly taught in the churches of New England, and we ask, can it be this for which men suffered martyrdom — this which changed the face of the world? Is this matter, for which sect contends with sect, to save the heathen world? Christianity was a simple thing in Paul's time; in Christ's it was simpler still. But what is it now? A modern writer somewhat quaintly says the early writers of the Christian church knew what Chris-

tianity was; they were the *fathers:* the scholastics and philosophers of the dark ages knew what reason was; they were the *doctors:* the religionists of modern times know neither what is Christianity nor what is reason; they are the *scrutators.*

## VII

## THOUGHTS ON THEOLOGY *

At the present day Germany seems to be the only country where the various disciplines of theology are pursued in the liberal and scientific spirit which some men fancy is peculiar to the nineteenth century. It is the only country where they seem to be studied for their own sake, as poetry, eloquence, and the mathematics have long been. In other quarters of the world they are left too much to men of subordinate intellect, of little elevation or range of thought, who pursue their course, which is "roundly smooth and languishingly slow," and after a life of strenuous assiduity, find they have not got beyond the "standards" set up ages before them. Many theologians seem to set out with their faces turned to some popular prejudice of their times, their church or their school, and walk backwards, as it were, or at best in a circle, where the movement is retrograde as often as direct. Somebody relates a story, that once upon a time a scholar, after visiting the place of his academic education, and finding the old professors then just where they were ten years before, discussing the same questions and blowing similar bubbles and splitting hairs anew, was asked by a friend, "what they were doing at the old place." He

* *Entwicklungsgeschichte der Lehre von der Person Christi von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die neuster, dargestellt.* Von J. A. Dorner, a. o. Professor der Theologie an der Universitat Tübingen. Stuttgart: 1839. 1 vol. 8vo, pp. xxiv. and 556. (Historical development of the doctrine of the person of Christ from the earliest to the latest times, etc.).

answered, "One was milking the barren heifer, and the others holding the sieve."

To this rule, for such we hold it to be in France, England, and America at this day, there are some brilliant exceptions; men who look with a single eye towards truth, and are willing to follow wherever she shall lead; men, too, whose mind and heart elevate them to the high places of human attainment, whence they can speak to bless mankind. These men are the creatures of no sect or school, and are found where God has placed them, in all the various denominations of our common faith. It is given to no party or coterie, to old school or new school, to monopolize truth, freedom, and love. We are sick of that narrowness which sees no excellence, except what wears the livery of its own guild. But the favored sons of the free spirit are so rare in the world at large, their attention so seldom turned to theological pursuits, that the above rule will be found to hold good in chief, and theology to be left, as by general consent, to men of humble talents and confined methods of thought, who walk mainly under the cloud of prejudice, and but rarely escape from the trammels of bigotry and superstition. Brilliant and profound minds turn away to politics, trade, law, the fascinating study of nature, so beautiful and composing; men who love freedom, and are gifted with power to soar through the empyrean of thought, seek a freer air and space more ample, wherein to spread their wings. Meanwhile the dim cloisters of theology, once filled with the great and wise of the earth, are rarely trod by the children of genius and liberty. We have wise, and pious, and learned, and eloquent preachers, the hope of the church, the ornaments and defense of society; men who contend for public virtue, and fight

the battle for all souls with earnest endeavor, but who yet care little for the science of divine things. We have sometimes feared our young men forsook in this their fathers' wiser ways, for surely there was a time when theology was *studied* in our land.

From the neglect of serious, disinterested, and manly thought, applied in this direction, there comes the obvious result; while each other science goes forward, passing through all the three stages requisite for its growth and perfection; while it makes new observations, or combines facts more judiciously, or from these infers and induces general laws, hitherto unnoticed, and so develops itself, becoming yearly wider, deeper, and more certain, its numerous phenomena being referred back to elementary principles and universal laws, theology remains in its old position. Its form has changed; but the change is not scientific, the result of an elementary principle. In the country of Bossuet and Hooker, we doubt that any new observation, any new combination of facts, has been made, or a general law discovered in these matters by any theologian of the present century, or a single step taken by theological science. In the former country an eminent philosopher, of a brilliant mind, with rare faculties of combination and lucid expression, though often wordy, has done much for psychology, chiefly, however, by uniting into one focus the several truths which emanate from various anterior systems; by popularizing the discoveries of deeper spirits than his own, and by turning the ingenuous youth to this noble science.[1] In spite of the defects arising from his presumption, and love of making all facts square with his formula, rather than the formula express the spirit of the facts, he has yet furnished a magazine whence theological supplies

may be drawn, and so has indirectly done much for a department of inquiry which he has himself never entered. We would not accept his errors, his hasty generalizations, and presumptuous flights — so they seem to us — and still less would we pass over the vast service he has done to this age by his vigorous attacks on the sensual philosophy, and his bold defense of spiritual thought. Mr. Coleridge, also in England, a spirit analogous, but not similar, to M. Cousin, has done great service to this science, but mainly by directing men to the old literature of his countrymen and the Greeks, or the new productions of his philosophical contemporaries on the continent of Europe. He seems to have caught a Pisgah view of that land of stream and meadow which he was forbid to enter. These writers have done great service to men whose date begins with this century. Others are now applying their methods, and writing their books, sometimes with only the enthusiasm of imitators, it may be.

We would speak tenderly of existing reputations in our own country, and honor the achievements of those men who, with hearts animated only by love of God and man, devote themselves to the pursuit of truth in this path, and outwatch the Bear in their severe studies. To them all honor! But we ask for the theologians of America, who shall take rank as such with our historians, our men of science and politics. Where are they? We have only the echo for answer, Are they?

We state only a common and notorious fact, in saying that there is no *science* of theology with us. There is enough cultivation and laborious thought in the clerical profession, perhaps, as some one says, more serious and hard thinking than in both the sister professions. The nature of the case demands it. So there

was thinking enough about natural philosophy among the Greeks after Aristotle; but little good came of it in the way of science. We hazard little in saying that no treatise has been printed in England in the present century of so great theological merit as that of pagan Cicero on the nature of the gods, or the preface to his treatise of laws. The work of Aristotle, we are told, is still the text-book of morals at the first university in Christian England.

In all science this seems everywhere the rule: The more light, the freer, the more profound and searching the investigation, why the better; the sooner a false theory is exploded, and a new one induced from the observed facts, the better also. In theology the opposite rule seems often to prevail. Hence, while other sciences go smoothly on in regular advance, theology moves only by leaps and violence. The theology of Protestantism and Unitarianism are not regular developments, which have grown harmoniously out of a systematic study of divine things, as the theory of gravitation and acoustics in the progress of philosophy.[2] They are rather the result of a spasmodic action, to use that term. It was no difficult thing in philosophy to separate astronomy from the magicians, and their works of astrology and divination. It required only years, and the gradual advance of mankind. But to separate religion from the existing forms, churches or records, is a work almost desperate, which causes strife and perhaps bloodshed. A theological reformation throws kingdoms into anarchy for the time. Doctrines in philosophy are neglected as soon as proved false, and buried as soon as dead. But the art of the embalmer preserves in the church the hulls of effete dogmas in theology, to cumber the ground for cen-

turies, and disgust the pious worshipper who would offer a reasonable service. It is only the living that *bury* the dead. The history of these matters is curious, and full of warning. What was once condemned by authority becomes itself an authority to condemn. What was once at the summit of the sublime, falls, in its turn, to the depth of the ridiculous. We remember a passage of Julius Firmicus,[3] which we will translate freely, as it illustrates this point: "Since all these things," namely, certain false notions, "were ill concocted, they were at first a terror unto mortals; then, when their novelty passed away, and mankind recovered, as it were, from a long disease, a certain degree of contempt arises for that former admiration. Thus, gradually, the human mind has ventured to scrutinize sharply, where it only admired with stupid amazement at the first. Very soon some sagacious observer penetrates to the secret places of these artificial and empty superstitions. Then, by assiduous efforts, understanding the mystery of what was formerly a secret, he comes to a real knowledge of the causes of things. Thus the human race first learns the pitiful deceits of the profane systems of religion; it next despises, and at last rejects them with disdain." Thus, as another has said, "Men quickly hated this blear-eyed religion (the Catholic superstitions), when a little light had come among them, which they hugged in the night of their ignorance."

For the successful prosecution of theology, as of every science, certain conditions must be observed. We must abandon prejudice. The maxim of the saint, Confido, ergo sum, is doubtless as true as that of the philosopher, Cogito, ergo sum. But it is pernicious when it means, as it often does, I believe, and

therefore it is so. The theologian of our day, like the astronomer of Galileo's time, must cast his idols of the tribe, the den, the market-place, and the school, to the moles and the bats; must have a disinterested love of truth; be willing to follow wherever she leads. He must have a willingness to search for all the facts relative to divine things, which can be gathered from the deeps of the human soul, or from each nation and every age. He must have diligence and candor to examine this mass of spiritual facts; philosophical skill to combine them; power to generalize and get the universal expression of each particular fact, thus discovering the one principle which lies under the numerous and conflicting phenomena. Need we say that he must have a good, pious, loving heart? An undevout theologian is the most desperate of madmen. A whole Anticyra [4] would not cure him.

This empire of prejudice is still wide enough a domain for the prince of lies; but formerly it was wider, and included many departments of philosophy which have since, through the rebellion of their tenants, been set off to the empire of reason, which extends every century. Theology, though now and then rebellious against its tyrant, has never shaken off his yoke, and seems part of his old ancestral domain, where he and his children shall long reign. An old writer [5] unconsciously describes times later than his own, and says "no two things do so usurp upon and waste the faculty of reason as enthusiasm and superstition; the one binding a faith, the other a fear upon the soul, which they vainly entitle some divine discovery; both train a man up to believe beyond possibility of proof; both instruct the mind to conceive merely by the wind the vain words of some passionate men, that can but pre-

tend a revelation or tell a strange story; both teach a man to deliver over himself to the confident dictate of the sons of imagination, to determine of things by measures phantastical, rules which cannot maintain themselves in credit by any sober and severe discourses; both inure the mind to divine rather than to judge, to dispute for maxims rather vehement than solid; both make a man afraid to believe himself, to acknowledge the truth that overpowers his mind, and that would reward its cordial entertainment with assurance and true freedom of spirit. Both place a man beyond possibility of conviction, it being in vain to present an argument against him that thinks he can confront a revelation, a miracle or some strange judgment from heaven, upon his adversary to your confusion. It seems there is not a greater evil in the state than wickedness established by law; nor a greater in the church than error [established] by religion, and an ignorant devotion towards God. And therefore no pains and care are too much to remove these two beams from the eye of human understanding, which render it insufficient for a just and faithful discovery of objects in religion and common science. 'Pessima res est errorum apotheosis, et pro peste intellectus habenda est, si vanis accedat veneratio.'" *

Theology is not yet studied in a philosophical spirit and the method of a science. Writers seem resolved to set up some standard of their fathers or their own; so they explore but a small part of the field, and that only with a certain end in view. They take a small part of the human race as the representative of the whole, and neglect all the rest. As the old geogra-

* Spencer's Discourse concerning Prodigies: London, 1665. Preface, p. xv.

phers drew a chart of the world, so far as they knew it, but crowded the margin, where the land was unknown, "with shrieks, and shapes, and sights unholy," with figures of dragons, chimeras, winged elephants, and four-footed whales, anthropophagi, and "men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders," so "divines" have given us the notions of a few sects of religious men, and telling us they never examined the others, have concluded to rest in this comprehensive generalization, that all besides were filled with falsehood and devilish devices. What is to be expected of such methods? Surely it were as well to give such inquirers at starting the result they must reach at the end of their course. It appears legitimate to leave both students and teachers of geology, mathematics, and science in general, to soar on the loftiest thoughts toward absolute truth, only stopping when the wing was weary or the goal reached; but to direct the students and teachers of things divine to accept certain conclusions arrived at centuries ago! If Faraday and Herschel pursued the *theological* method in their sciences, no harm would be done to them or the world if they were required to accept the "standard" of Thales or Paracelsus, and subscribe the old creed every lustrum. The method could lead to nothing better, and the conclusion the inquirer must reach might as well be forced upon him at the beginning as the end of his circular course. The ridiculous part of the matter is this, that the man professes to search for whatever truth is to be found, but has sworn a solemn oath never to accept as truth what does not conform to the idols he worships at home. We have sometimes thought what a strange spectacle — ridiculous to the merry, but sad to the serious — would appear

if the Almighty should have sent down the brilliant image of pure, absolute religion into the assembly of divines at Westminster or any similar assembly. Who would acknowledge the image?

The empire of prejudice is perhaps the last stronghold of the father of lies that will surrender to reason. At present a great part of the domain of theology is under the rule of that most ancient czar. There common sense rarely shows his honest face, reason seldom comes. It is a land shadowy with the wings of ignorance, superstition, bigotry, fanaticism, the brood of clawed and beaked and hungry chaos and most ancient night. There darkness, as an eagle, stirreth up her nest; fluttereth over her young; spreadeth abroad her wings; taketh her children; beareth them on her wings over the high places of the earth that they may eat, and trample down and defile the increase of the fields. There stands the great arsenal of folly; and the old war-cry of the pagan, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," is blazoned on the banner that floats above its walls. There the spectres of Judaism, and heathenism, and pope and pagan, pace forth their nightly round; the ghost of Moloch, Saturn, Baal, Odin, fight their battles over again, and feast upon the dead. There the eye is terrified, and the mind made mad with the picture of a world that has scarce a redeeming feature, with a picture of heaven such as a good free man would scorn to enter, and a picture of hell such as a fury would delight to paint.

If we look a little at the history of theology, it appears that errors find easiest entrance there, and are most difficult to dislodge. It required centuries to drive out of the Christian church a belief in ghosts and witches. The devil is still a classical personage

of theology; his existence maintained by certain churches in their articles of faith; and while we are writing these pages, a friend tells us of hearing a preacher of the popular doctrine declare in his public teaching from the pulpit, that to deny the existence of the devil is to destroy the character of Christ. In science, we ask first, What are the facts of observation whence we shall start? Next, What is the true and natural order, explanation, and meaning of these facts? The first work is to find the facts, then their law and meaning. Now here are two things to be considered, namely, facts and no-facts. For every false theory there are a thousand false facts. In theology, the data, in many celebrated cases, are facts of assumption, not observation; in a word, are no-facts. When Charles the Second asked the Royal Society "why a living fish put into a vessel of water added nothing to the weight of the water?" there were enough, no doubt, to devise a theory, and explain the fact, "by the upward pressure of the water," "the buoyancy of the air in the living fish," "its motion and the re-action of the water." But when some one ventured to verify the fact, it was found to be no-fact. Had the Royal Academy been composed of "divines," and not of naturalists and philosophers, the theological method would have been pursued, and we should have had theories as numerous as the attempts to reconcile the story of Jonah with human experience, and science would be where it was at first. Theology generally passes dry-shod over the first question,— *What are the facts?* —"with its garlands and singing robes about it." Its answer to the next query is therefore of no value.

We speak historically of things that have happened,

when we say that many, if not most, of those theological questions which have been matters of dispute and railing belong to the class of explanations of no-facts. Such, we take it, are the speculations, for the most part, that have grown out of the myths [6] of the Old and New Testament; about angels, devils, personal appearances of the Deity, miraculous judgments, supernatural prophecies, the trinity, and the whole class of miracles from Genesis to Revelation. Easy faith and hard logic have done enough in theology. Let us answer the first question, and verify the facts before we attempt to explain them.

As we look back on the history of the world the retrospect is painful. The history of science is that of many wanderings before reaching the truth. But the history of theology is the darkest chapter of all, for neither the true end nor the true path seems yet to be discovered and pursued. In the history of every department of thought there seem to be three periods pretty distinctly marked: first, the period of *hypothesis*, when observation is not accurate, and the solution of the problem, when stated, is a matter of conjecture, mere guess-work. Next comes the period of *observation and induction*, when men ask for the facts and their law. Finally, there is the period when science is developed still further *by its own laws* without the need of new observations. Such is the present state of mathematics, speculative astronomy, and some other departments, as we think. Thus science may be in advance of observation. Some of the profound remarks of Newton belong to this last epoch of science. An ancient was in the first when he answered the question, "why does a man draw his feet under him when he wishes to rise from his seat?" by saying it

was "on account of the occult properties of the circle."

Now theology with us is certainly in the period of hypothesis. The facts are assumed; the explanation is guesswork. To take an example from a section of theology much insisted on at the present day — the use and meaning of miracles. The general thesis is, that miracles confirm the authority of him who works them, and authenticate his teachings to be divine. We will state it in a syllogistic and more concrete form. Every miracle-worker is a heaven-sent and infallible teacher of truth. Jonah is a miracle-worker. Therefore Jonah is a heaven-sent and infallible teacher of truth. Now we should begin by denying the major in full, and go on to ask proofs of the minor. But the theological method is to assume both. When both premises are assumptions, the conclusion will be — what we see it is. Men build neither castles nor temples of moonshine. Yet, in spite of this defect, limitation, and weakness, it is a common thing to subject other sciences to this pretended science of theology. Psychology, ethics, geology, and astronomy, are successively arranged, examined, and censured or condemned because their conclusions — though legitimately deduced from notorious facts — do not square with the asumptions of theology, which still aspires to be head of all. But to present this claim for theology in its present state is like making the bramble king over the trees of the forest. .The result would be as in Jotham's parable. Theology would say, "Come and put your trust in my shadow. But if you will not, a fire shall go out from the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon."

Now it seems to us there are two legitimate methods of attempting to improve and advance theology. One

is for the theologian to begin anew, trusting entirely to meditation, contemplation, and thought, and ask what can be known of divine things, and how can it be known and legitimated? This work of course demands that he should criticise the faculty of knowing, and determine its laws, and see, *à priori*, what are our instruments of knowing, and what the law and method of their use, and thus discover the novum organum of theology. This determined, he must direct his eye inward on what passes there, studying the stars of that inner firmament, as the astronomer reads the phenomena of the heavens. He must also look outward on the face of nature and of man, and thus read the primitive gospel God wrote on the heart of his child, and illustrated in the earth and the sky and the events of life. Thus from observations made in the external world, made also in the internal world, comprising both the reflective and the intuitive faculties of man, he is to frame the theory of God, of man, of the relation between God and man, and of the duties that grow out of this relation, for with these four questions we suppose theology is exclusively concerned. This is the philosophical method, and it is strictly legimate. It is pursued in the other sciences, and to good purpose. This science becomes the interpreter of nature, not its lawgiver. The other method is to get the sum of the theological thinking of the human race, and out of this mass construct a system, without attempting a fresh observation of facts. This is the historical method, and it is useful to show what has been done. The opinion of mankind deserves respect, no doubt; but this method can lead to a perfect theology no more than historical eclecticism can lead to a perfect philosophy. The former

researches in theology, as in magnetism and geology, offer but a narrow and inadequate basis to rest on.

This historical scheme has often been attempted, but never systematically, thoroughly, and critically, so far as we know. In England and America, however, it seems almost entirely to have dispossessed the philosophical method of its rights. But it has been conducted in a narrow, exclusive manner, after the fashion of antiquarians searching to prove a pre-conceived opinion, rather than in the spirit of philosophical investigation. From such measures we must expect melancholy results. From the common abhorrence of the philosophical method, and the narrow and uncritical spirit in which the historical method is commonly pursued, comes this result. Our philosophy of divine things is the poorest of all of our poor philosophies. It is not a theology, but a despair of all theology. The theologian — as Lord Bacon says of a method of philosophizing that was common in his time — "hurries on rapidly from particulars to the most general axioms, and from them as principles, and their supposed indisputable truth, derives and discovers the intermediate axioms." Of course what is built on conjecture, and only by guess, can never satisfy men who ask for the facts and their law and explanation.

Still more, deference for authority is carried to the greatest extreme in theology. The sectarian must not dispute against the "standards" set up by the Synod of Dort, the Westminster divines, or the Council of Trent. These settle all controversies. If the theologian is no sectarian, in the usual sense of that word, then his "standard" is the Bible. He settles questions of philosophy, morals, and religion, by citing texts, which prove only the opinion of the writer, and

perhaps not even that. The chain of his argument is made of scripture sentences well twisted. As things are now managed by theologians in general there is little chance of improvement. As Bacon says of universities in his day, "they learn nothing but to believe; first, that others know this which they know not, and often [that] themselves know that which they know not. They are like a becalmed ship; they never move but by the wind of other men's breath, and have no oars of their own to steer withal." And again: "All things are found opposite to advancement, for the readings and exercises are so managed that it cannot easily come into any one's mind to think of things out of the common road; or if, here and there, one should venture to ask a liberty of judging, he can only impose the task upon himself, without obtaining assistance from his fellows; and if he could dispense with this, he will still find his industry and resolution a great hindrance to his fortune. For the studies of men in such places are confined and penned down to the writings of certain authors, from which if any man happens to differ he is presently reprehended as a disturber and innovator." And still further: "Their wits being shut up in the cells of a few authors did, out of no great quantity of matter, and infinite agitation of wit, spin cobwebs of learning admirable for the fineness of thread and work, but of no substance or profit."

There are two methods of philosophizing in general, that of the materialists and spiritualists, to use these terms. The one is perhaps most ably represented in the Novum Organum of Lord Bacon, and the other in Descartes' Book of Method and of Principles. The lattter was early introduced to England by a few

Platonizing philosophers,— now better known abroad than at home, we fancy,— whose pious lives, severe study, and volumes full of the ripest thought, have not yet redeemed them, in the judgment of their countrymen, from the charge of being mystics, dreamers of dreams, too high for this world, too low for the next, so of no use in either. But this method, inasmuch as it laid great stress on the inward and the ideal — in the Platonic sense — and, at least in its onesidedness and misapplication, led sometimes to the visionary and absurd, has been abandoned by our brethren in England. Few British scholars since the seventeenth century have studied theology in the spirit of the Cartesian method. The other method, that of Bacon, begins by neglecting that half of man's nature which is primarily concerned with divine things. This has been found more congenial with the taste and character of the English and American nations. They have applied it with eminent success to experimental science, for which it was designed, and from which it was almost exclusively derived by its illustrious author. We would speak with becoming diffidence respecting the defects of a mind so vast as Bacon's, which burst the trammels of Aristotle and the school men, emancipated philosophy in great measure from the theological method which would cripple the intellectual energies of the race. But it must be confessed that Bacon's philosophy recognizes scarcely the possibility of a theology, certainly of none but an historical theology, gathering up the limbs of Osiris dispersed throughout the world. It lives in the senses, not the soul. Accordingly, this method is applied chiefly in the departments of natural and mechanical philosophy, and even here Englishmen begin

to find it inadequate to the ultimate purposes of science, by reason of its exceeding outwardness, and so look for a better instrument than the Novum Organum wherewith to arm the hand of science.* One of the most thorough Baconians of the present day, as we understand it, is M. Comte, the author of the course of positive philosophy just published at Paris; and it is curious to see the results he has reached, namely, materialism in psychology, selfishness in ethics, and atheism in theology.[7] It is not for us to say he is logically false to his principles.

Some of the countrymen of Bacon, however, have attempted to apply his method in other departments of human inquiry. Locke has done this in metaphysics. It was with Bacon's new instrument in his hand that he struck at the root of innate ideas, at our idea of infinity, eternity and the like. But here his good sense sometimes, his excellent heart and character, truly humane and Christian, much oftener, as we think, saved him from the conclusions to which this method has legitimately led others who have followed it. The method defective, so was the work. A Damascus mechanic, with a very rude instrument, may form exquisite blades and delicate filigree; but no skill of the artist, no excellence of heart, can counteract the defects of the Novum Organum, when applied to morals, metaphysics or theology. Hume furnishes another instance of the same kind. His treatise of Natural Religion we take to be a rigid application of Bacon's method in theological inquiries, and his inductions to be legitimate, admitting his premises and accepting his method. A

* See Whewell's Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences, etc. London, 1840. 2 vols. bvo. Preface to Vol. I.

third instance of the same kind is afforded by the excellent Dr. Paley. Here this method is applied in morals; the result is too well known to need mention.

Never did a new broom sweep so clean as this new instrument in the various departments of metaphysics, theology, and ethics. Love, God, and the soul are swept clean out of doors.* We are not surprised that no one, following Bacon's scheme, has ever succeeded in argument with these illustrious men, or driven materialism, selfishness, and scepticism from the field of philosophy, morals, and religion. The answer to these systems must come from men who adopt a different method. Weapons tempered in another spring were needed to cleave asunder the seven-orbed Baconian shield, and rout the scepticism sheltered thereby. No Baconian philosopher, so it seems to us, has ever ruffled its terrible crest, though the merest stripling of the gospel could bring it to the ground. The replies to Locke, Hume, Paley, come into England from countries where a more spiritual philosophy has fortunately got footing.

The consequences of this exclusive Baconianism of the English have been disastrous to theological pursuits. The "divines" in England, at the present day, her bishops, professors, and prebendaries are not theologians. They are logicians, chemists, skilled in the mathematics; historians, poor commentators upon Greek poets. Theology is out of their line. They have taken the ironical advice of Bishop Hare.[8] Hence it comes to pass, either that theology is not *studied* at all, only an outside and preparatory department is entered; or it is studied with little success,

* We would not have it supposed we charge these results upon the *men*, but on their systems, if legitimately carried out.

even when a man like Lord Brougham[9] girds himself for the task. The most significant theological productions of the last five-and-twenty years in England are the Bridgewater Treatises,[10] some of which are valuable contributions to natural science. Of Lord Brougham's theological writings little need be said; and of the Oxford Tracts,[11] we shall only say, that while we admire the piety displayed in them, we do not wonder that their authors despair of theology, and so fall back on dark ages; take authority for truth, and not truth for authority. The impotence of the English in this department is surely no marvel. It would take even a giant a long time to hew down an oak with a paver's maul, useful as that instrument may be in another place. Few attempt theology, and fewer still succeed. Men despair of the whole matter. While truth is before them in all other departments, and research gives not merely historical results to the antiquary, but positive conclusions to the diligent seeker, here, in the most important of all the fields of human speculation, she is supposed to be only behind us, and to have no future blessing to bestow. Thus theology, though both queen and mother of all science, is left alone, unapproached, unseen, unhonored, though worshipped by a few weak idolaters with vain oblation, and incense kindled afar off, while strong men and the whole people have gone up on every hill-top and under every green tree, to sacrifice and do homage to the useful and the agreeable. Any one who reads the English theological journals or other recent works on those subjects, will see the truth of what we have said, and how their scholars retreat to the time of the Reformation and Revolution, and bring up the mighty dead, the Hookers, the Taylors, the

Cudworths, with their illustrious predecessors and contemporaries, who with all their faults, had a spark of manly fire in their bosoms, which shone out in all their works. It must be confessed that theology in England and America is in about the same state with astronomy in the time of Scotus Erigena.

Now theological problems change from age to age; the reflective character of our age, the philosophical spirit that marks our time, is raising questions in theology never put before. If the "divines" will not think of theological subjects, nor meet the question, why others will. The matter cannot be winked out of sight. Accordingly, unless we are much deceived, the educated laymen have applied good sense to theology, as the "divines" have not dared to do, at least in public, and reached conclusions far in advance of the theology of the pulpit. It is a natural consequence of the theological method that the men wedded to it should be further from truth in divine things than men free from its shackles. It is not strange, then, for the pulpit to be behind the pews. Yet it would be very surprising if the professors of medicine, chemistry, and mathematics understood those mysteries more imperfectly than laymen, who but thought of the matter incidentally, as it were.

The history of theology shows an advance, at least a change, in its great questions. They rise in one age and are settled in the next, after some fierce disputing; for it is a noticeable fact that as religious wars — so they are called — are of all others the most bloody, so theological controversies are most distinguished for misunderstanding, perversity, and abuse. We know not why, but such is the fact. Now there are some great questions in theology that come up in our

time to be settled, which have not been asked in the same spirit before. Among them are the following.

What relation does Christianity bear to the Absolute? What relation does Jesus of Nazareth bear to the human race? What relation do the scriptures of the Old and New Testament bear to Christianity?

The first is the vital question, and will perhaps be scarce settled favorably to the Christianity of the church. The second also is a serious question, but one which the recent discussions of the Trinity will help to answer. The third is a practical and historical question of great interest. In the time of Paul the problem was to separate religion from the forms of the Mosiac ritual; in Luther's day, to separate it from the forms of the church; in our age, to separate it from the letter of scripture, and all personal authority, pretended or real, and leave it to stand or fall by itself. There is nothing to fear from truth or for truth. But if these questions be answered, as we think they must be, then a change will come over the spirit of our theology, to which all former changes therein were as nothing. But what is true will stand; yes, will stand, though all present theologies perish.

We have complained of the position of theology in England and America. Let us look a little into a single department of it, and one most congenial to the English mind, that of ecclesiastical history; here our literature is most miserably deficient. Most English writers quote the Fathers, as if any writer of the first six centuries was as good authority for whatever relates to the primitive practice or opinion as Clement of Alexandria or Justin Martyr. Apart from the honorable and ancient name of Cave, we have scarce an original historian of the church in the English

tongue, unless we mention Mr. Campbell,[12] whose little work is candid and clear, and shows an acquaintance with the sources, though sometimes it betrays too much of a polemical spirit. England has produced three great historians within less than a century. Their works, though unequal, are classics; and their name and influence will not soon pass away. To rank with them in ecclesiastical history, we have Echhard, Milner, Waddington, Milman! The French have at least Dupin, Tillemont, and Fleury; the Germans, Mosheim, Walch, Arnold, Semler, Schroeckh, Gieseler and Neander, not to mention others scarcely inferior to any of these. In America, little is to be expected of our labors in this department. We have no libraries that would enable us to verify the quotation in Gieseler; none perhaps that contains all the important sources of ecclesiastical history. Still, all other departments of this field are open to us, where a large library is fortunately not needed.

Now in Germany theology is still studied by minds of a superior order, and that with all the aid which science can offer in the nineteenth century. The mantle of the prophet, ascending from France and England, and with it a double portion of her spirit, has fallen there. Theology has but shifted her ground, not forsaken the earth; so it is said there is always one phœnix, and one alone, in the world, although it is sometimes in the Arabian, sometimes in the Persian sky. In that country, we say it with thanksgiving, theology is still pursued. Leibnitz used to boast that his countrymen came late to philosophy. It seems they found their account in entering the field after the mists of morning had left the sky, and the barriers could be seen when the dew had vanished

from the grass. They have come through philosophy to theology still later; for the theology of the Germans before Semler's time, valuable as it is in some respects, is only related to the modern, as our Scandinavian fathers who worshipped Odin and Thor two thousand years ago, are related to us. Germany is said to be the land of books. It is par eminence the land of theological books. To look over the Literatur Anzeiger, one is filled with amazement and horror at the thought, that somebody is to read each of the books, and many will attempt inward digestion thereof. Some thousands of years ago it was said, "of writing books there is no end." What would the same man say could he look over the catalogue of the last Leipsic fair?

We do not wonder that the eyes of theologians are turned attentively to Germany at this time, regarding it as the new east out of which the star of hope is to rise. Still, it is but a mixed result which we can expect; something will no doubt be effected both of good and ill. It is the part of men to welcome the former and ward off the latter. But we will here close our somewhat desultory remarks, and address ourselves to the work named at the head of this article.[18]

In any country but Germany we think this would be reckoned a wonderful book; capable not only of making the author's literary reputation, but of making an epoch in the study of ecclesiastical history, and of theology itself. The work is remarkable in respect to both of these departments of thought. Since copies of it are rare in this country we have been induced to transfer to our pages some of the author's most instructive thoughts and conclusions, and give the general scope of the book itself, widely as it differs

in many respects from our own view. Its author is a professor of theology at one of the more orthodox seminaries in Germany; and, so far as we know, this is the only work he has given to the public in an independent form.

In one of the prefaces — for the work has two, and an introduction to boot — the author says that as Christianity goes on developing itself, and as men get clearer notions of what they contend about, all theological controversies come to turn more and more upon the person of Christ, as the point where all must be decided. With this discovery much is gained, for the right decision depends, in some measure, on putting the question in a right way. It is easy to see that all turns on this question, whether it is necessary that there should be, and whether there actually has been, such a Christ as is represented in the meaning, though not always in the words of the church. That is, whether there must be and has been a being in whom the perfect union of the divine and the human has been made manifest in history. Now if philosophy can demonstrate incontestably that a Christ, in the above sense, is a notion self-contradictory, and therefore impossible, there can no longer be any controversy between philosophy and theology. Then the Christ and the Christian church — as such — have ceased to exist; or rather philosophy has conquered the whole department of Christian theology, as it were, from the enemy; for when the citadel is taken, the outworks must surrender at discretion. On the other hand, if it is shown that the notion of an historical, as well as an ideal, Christ is a necessary notion, "and the speculative construction of the person of Christ" is admitted, then philosophy and theology, essentially and most inti-

mately set at one with each other, may continue their common work in peace. Philosophy has not lost her independence, but gained new strength. Now one party says, this is done already, "the person of Christ is constructed speculatively;" while the other says, the lists are now to be closed, inasmuch as it has been demonstrated that there can be no Christ who is alike historical and ideal.

Professor Dorner thinks both parties are wrong, that "the speculative construction of the Christ" is not yet completed: or in other words, that it has not yet been shown by speculative logic that an entire and perfect incarnation of the Infinite, in the form of a perfect man, is an eternal and absolute idea, and therefore necesary to the salvation and completion of the human race; nor, on the other hand, has the opposite been demonstrated. Faith has been developed on one side, and reason on the other, but not united. Philosophy and religion are only enamored of one another, not wed; and the course of their true love is anything but smooth. His object is to show what has already passed between the two parties; or, to speak without a figure, to give the net result of all attempts to explain by reason or faith the idea of the Christ, to show what has been done, and what still remains to be done, in this matter. He thinks there is no great gulf fixed between faith and reason; that if Christianity be rational, that reason itself has been unfolded and strengthened by Christianity, and may go on with no limit to her course.

He adds, moreover, that if Christ be, as theologians affirm, the key to open the history of the world, as well as to unloose all riddles, then it is not modesty but arrogant inactivity which will not learn to use

this key, and disclose all mysteries. He assumes two things in this inquiry, with no attempt at proof, namely, first, that the idea of a God-man — a being who is at the same time perfect God and perfect man — is the great feature of Christianity; that this idea was made actual in Jesus of Nazareth; and again that this idea of a God-man exists, though unconsciously, in all religions, that it has been and must be the ideal of life to be both human and divine, a man filled and influenced by the power of God. Soon as man turns to this subject it is seen that a holy and blessed life in God can only be conceived of as the unity of the divine and human life. Still further, the ideal of a revelation of God consists in this, that God reveals himself not merely in signs and the phenomena of outward nature, which is blind and dumb, and knows not him who knows it, but that he should reveal himself in the form of a being who is self-conscious, and knows him as he is known by him. In the infancy of thought, it was concluded, no adequate representation of God could be made in the form of a God-man; for the divine and human were reckoned incompatible elements, or incommensurable quantities. God was considered an abstract essence, of whom even being was to be predicated only with modesty. In its theoretic result this differed little from atheism; for it was not the Infinite, but an indefinite being, who revealed himself in the finite.

Now Christianity makes a different claim to the God-man. It has been the constant faith of the Christian church that in Jesus the union of the divine and human was effected in a personal and peculiar manner. But the objection was made early, and is still repeated, that this idea is not original in Christianity, since there

were parallel historical manifestations of God in the flesh before Jesus. But if this objection were real it is of no value. Its time has gone by, since Christianity is regarded as a doctrine, and not merely an historical fact, as the organization of truth, which unites the scattered portions into one whole, that they may lie more level to the comprehension of men. But to settle this question, whether the idea is original with Christianity, it becomes necessary to examine the previous religions, and notice their essential agreement or disagreement with this.

"In this posture of affairs, all contributions will be welcome which serve to give a clearer notion of the ante-christian religions. So far as these contributions contain only the truth, it is a matter of indifference whether they are made with a design hostile or favorable to Christianity. For the more perfectly we survey the field of ante-christian religions, in its whole compass, the more clearly, on the one hand, do we perceive the preparation made for Christianity by previous religions, and its historical necessity; and, on the other hand, as we look back over all the phenomena in this field, we see not less clearly the same newness and originality of the Christian religion, which has long been admitted by every sound historical mind, as it looks forward and sees its world-traversing and inexhaustible power. Yes, we must say, that it is for the sake of proving the truth of Christianity, and in particular of its all-supporting, fundamental idea — the absolute incarnation of God in Christ — that we have abandoned the more limited stand-point which was supported by single peculiarities, such as inspiration, prophecy, and the like; that taking our position in the more comprehensive stand-point, supported by

the whole course of religious history before Christ, we may thoroughly understand how the whole ante-christian world strives towards Christ; how in him the common riddle of all previous religions is solved, and how in him, or, still more particularly, in his fundamental idea, lies the solution by which we can understand all these religions better than they understood themselves. So long as all religions are not understood in their essential relation to Christianity, as negative or positive preparations for it, so long the historical side thereof will swing in the air."

He then goes on to inquire if it were possible this idea of the God-man could proceed from any religion before Christ, or was extant in his time. The Jews were hostile to it, as appears from the various forms of Ebionitism embraced by the Jewish Christians. Besides, the doctrine, or the fact, finds no adequate expression in Peter or James, in Matthew, Mark, or Luke. Hence, some have conjectured it came from heathenism, and the conjecture seems at first corroborated by the fact that it was not developed in the church until the Gentiles had come in, and the apostles who lived in the midst of the heathens were the men who taught this doctrine.* But this natural suspicion is without foundation. Heathenism may be divided into eastern and western. The Indian religion may be taken as the type of one, the Greek of the other. But neither separates God distinctly enough

* The influence of heathenism on the opinions of the primitive Christians has never yet, it would seem, had justice done it by writers of ecclesiastical history. We see traces of in the apocryphal Gospels and Epistles, some of which are perhaps as ancient as the canonical writings. In our view, the divinity of Christ, and its numerous correlative doctrines, come from this source.

from the world. Both deserve to be called the worship of nature.* One proceeds from the divine in the objective world, the other from the finite, and both seek the common end, the unity of the divine and human. Hence, in the east, the various incarnations of Krishna, in one of which he assumes the human form as the highest of all. Here the God descends to earth, and becomes a man. Again, Vishnu actually becomes man. The idea of the God-man appears, as in Christianity, in the condescension of God to the human form. There is no doubt these notions were well known in Alexandria in the time of Jesus. But the Christian idea cannot be explained from this source, for the true unity of the divine and human natures nowhere appears, therefore the redemption of men by the eastern religion is but momentary. The incarnate Deity does not draw men to him. Besides, the dualism of this system destroys its value and influence. It ends, at last, in a sort of quietism and pantheism, which denies the existence of the world.

The Greek religion is the opposite of this. It deifies man, instead of humanizing God. It admitted polytheism, though a belief in fate still lingered there, as the last relic of primitive pantheism. It does not develop the ethical idea, but confounds it with physical causes. It begins, in part, the opposite way from the Indian, but comes to the same conclusion at last, a denial of all but God, "the one divine substance before which all the finite is an illusion." † Besides, our au-

* This we think true of neither, except while the religion was in its weak and incipient stages. In the Greek religion there are three stages, the Saturnian, Olympian, and Dionysian. Only the first is a worship of nature.

† This wholesale way of disposing of centuries of philosophical inquiry is quite as unsafe as it were to take the mid-

thor finds the moral element is wanting in the Greek religion. In this conclusion, however, we think him too hasty; certainly the moral element has its proper place in such writers as Æschylus, Pindar, and Plato. It would be difficult to find an author in ancient or modern times in whom justice is more amply done to the moral sense than in the latter.

However, Dr. Dorner thinks Parsism is an exception to the general rule of ancient religions. Here the moral element occurs in so perfect a form that some will not reckon it with the heathen religions. But this has not got above the adoration of nature, which defiles all the other heathen forms of religion. Besides, the dualism which runs through all the oriental systems allows no true union of the divine and human. Accordingly, the Parsee Christians always had a strong tendency to Manicheism, and ran it out into the notions of the Docetæ, and then found that in Jesus there was no union of the two natures. According to Parsism, the divine can never coalesce with the human; for the Infinite Being, who is the cause of both Ormuzd and Ahriman, remains always immovable, and at perfect rest. It, however, admits a sort of Arian notion of a mediator between him and us, and has a poor sort of a God-man in the person of Sosiosh, though some conjecture this is a more modern notion they have taken from the Jews. Thus it appears the central idea of Christianity could have proceeded from no heathen religion.

Could it come from the Hebrew system? Quite as

dle-age philosophers, the mystics, the sensualists of England and France, with the transcendentalists of Germany, as the natural results and legitimate issue of the Christian religion.

little.* Of all the ancient religions, the Hebrew alone separates God from the world, says our mistaken author, and recognizes the distinct personality of both God and man. This solves the difficulty of heathenism. It dwells on the moral union of man and God, and would have it go on and become perfect, and in the end God write the law in the heart, as in the beginning he wrote it on tables of stone.† But in avoiding the adoration of nature, the Jews took such a view of the Deity that it seemed impossible to them that he should incarnate himself in man. All the revelations of God in the Old Testament are not the remotest approach to an incarnation like that in Jesus. They made a great chasm between God and man, which they attempted to fill up with angels and the like.‡ The descriptions of wisdom in Proverbs, the Apocrypha, and Philo, are not at all like the Christian incarnation. The Alexandrian Jews assimilated to the Greek system, and adopted the Platonic view of the Logos, while the Palestine Jews, instead of making their idea of the Messiah more lofty and pure, and rendering it more intense, only gave it a more extensive range, and thought of a political deliverer. Thus it appears the idea of a God-man could not come from any of these

* See the attempt of Mr. Hennell (Inquiry into the Divine Origin of Christianity: London, 1839. 1 vol. 8vo, pp. 8—23) to derive some of the Christian ideas from the Essenes

† If we understand the Hebrew Scriptures, and St. Paul, they both teach that he did write the law in the heart in the beginning, else the law of stone were worthless.

‡ Here, also, the author fails to notice the striking fact of the regular progress of the theophanies of the Old Testament. 1. God appears himself in human form, and speaks and eats with man. 2. It is an angel of God who appears. 3. He speaks only in visions, thoughts, and the like, and his appearance is entirely subjective. We see the same progress in all primitive religious nations.

sources, nor yet from any contemporary philosophy or religion. It must, therefore, be original with Christianity itself. It was impossible for a heathen or Hebrew to say, in the Christian sense, that a man was God or the son of God. But all former religions were only a præparatio evangelica in the highest sense. This fact shows that Christianity expresses what all religions sought to utter, and combines in itself the truths of heathenism and Judiasm.

"Judiasm was great through the idea of the absolute, personal God; the greatest excellence of heathenism is the idea of the most intimate nearness and residence of a divine life in a free human form. But the idea of the personal existence of God in Christ was both of them united together into a higher unity. According to the heathen way of considering the matter, the divine, alone absolute and impersonal Being, who soars above the gods — if it is possible for him to reveal himself — must have first in Christ come to a personal consciousness of himself, which he had not before; but this would be the generation of a personal God through the form of human life, and therefore a human act. Judiasm had for its foundation not an obscure, impersonal being, a merely empty substance, but a subject, a personality. But to such as admitted its form of monotheism, the incarnation of God seemed blasphemy. But Christianity is the truth of both systems. In the personality of Christ it sees as well a man who is God, as a God who is man. With the one, it sees in Jesus as well the truth of the Hellenic apotheosis of human nature, as with the other it sees the complete condescencion of God, which is the fundamental idea in the east. But it required long and various warfare before the Christian principle went

through the Greek and Jewish principle and presented to the understanding its true form. We shall see that even now its work is not completed." *

He next turns to consider the historical development of this central idea, which Jesus brought to light in word and life. This remained always enveloped in the church, but it was not developed, except gradually, and part by part. Then he proceeds on the clever hypothesis that all moral and religious truth was potentially involved in the early teachers, though not professed consciously and actually evolved by them; a maxim which may be applied equally to all philosophers, of all schools, for every man involves all truth, though only here and there a wise man evolves a little thereof. Now, the church did not state all this doctrine in good set speech, yet it knew intuitively how to separate false from true doctrine, not as an individual good man separates wrong from right, by means of conscience. This is rather more true of the church than it is of particular teachers, who have not been inventors of truth, but only mouths which uttered the truth possessed by the church.† However, amid conflicting opinions, where he gets but intimations of the idea of a God-man, and amid many doctrines taught consciously, he finds this tendency to glorify Christ, even to deify him, which he regards as a proof that the great central idea lay there. This, also, we take to be a very great mistake, and think the tendency to

* We have given a pretty free version of portions of this extract, and are not quite certain that in all cases we have taken the author's meaning.

† But these mouths of the church seem smitten with the old spirit of Babel, for their "language was confounded, and they did not understand one another's speech," nor always their own, we fancy.

deify persons arose from several causes, such as the popular despair of man,[14] The outward aspect of the world allows us to form but a low opinion of man; the retrospect is still worse. Besides, some distrusted the inspiration which God gives man on condition of holiness and purity. Therefore, when any one rose up, and far transcended the achievements and expectations of mere vulgar souls, they said he is not a man but a god, at least the son of a god; human nature is not capable of so much. Hence, all the heroes of times pretty ancient are either gods or the descendants of gods, or at least miraculously inspired to do their particular works. Then the polytheistic notions of the new converts to Christianity favored this popular despair, by referring the most shining examples of goodness and wisdom to the gods. Hence, for those who had believed that Hercules, Bacchus, and Devanisi were men, and became gods by the special grace of the Supreme, it was easy to elevate Jesus, and give him power over their former divinities, or even expel them if this course were necessary. Now, there are but two scales to this balance, and what was added to the divinity of Jesus was taken from his humanity, and so the power of man underrated. Hence, we always find that as a party assigns Jesus a divine, extra-human or miraculous character, on the one hand, just so far it degrades man on the other, and takes low views of human nature. The total depravity of man, and the total divinity of Jesus, come out of the same logical root. To examine the history of the world by striking the words and life of Jesus out of the series of natural and perfectly human actions, and then deciding as if such actions had never been, seems to us quite as absurd as it would be, in

giving a description of Switzerland, to strike out the Alps and the lakes, and then say the country was level and dull, monotonous and dry. To us, the popular notions of the character of Jesus "have taken away our Lord, and we know not where they have laid him." To our apprehension, Jesus was much greater than the evangelists represent him. We would not measure him by the conceptions formed by Jewish or heathen converts, but by the long stream of light he shed on the first three centuries after his death and through them on all time since.

But to return to our task. Dr. Dorner admits this idea does not appear in the earliest Christian writings, which we think is quite as inexplicable, taking his standpoint, as it would be if Columbus, after the discovery of the new continent, had founded a school of geographers, and no one of his pupils had ever set down America in his map of the world, or alluded to it except by implication. But as Christianity went on developing, it took some extra-Christian ideas from the other religions. Thus from Judiasm it took the notion of a primitive man and a primitive prophet; from heathenism, the doctrine of the Logos. These two rival elements balanced each other, and gave a universal development to the new principle. Thus while Christianity attacked its foes, it built up its own dogmatics, not unlike the contemporaries of Ezra, who held the sword in one hand and the trowel in the other. He finds three periods in the history of Christology: I. That of the establishment of the doctrine that there were two essential elements in Jesus, the divine and human. II. Period of the one-sided elevation of either the one or the other; this has two epochs: 1. From the Council of Nice to the Reformation;

period of the divine side. 2. From the Reformation to Kant; period of the human side. III. Period of the attempt to show both in him, and how they unite. We must pass very hastily over the rest of the work; for after we have thus minutely described his standpoint and some of his general views, and have shown his method, the student of history will see what his opinions must be of the great teachers in the church, whose doctrines are well known.

To make the new doctrines of Christianity intelligible, the first thing was to get an adequate expression, in theological dogmas, of the nature of Christ. On this question the Christian world divides into two great parties — one follows a Hebrew, the other a Greek, tendency — one taking the human, the other the divine, side of Christ. Hence come two independent Christologies, the one without the divine, the other without the human, nature in Jesus. These are the Ebionites and the Docetæ. "Docetism, considered in antithesis with Ebionitism, is a very powerful witness of the deep and wonderful impression of its divinity, which the new principle had made on mankind at its appearance; an impression which is by no means fully described by all that Ebionitism could say of a new, great, and holy prophet that had risen up. On the other hand, Ebionitism itself, in its lack of ideal tendency, is a powerful evidence on the historical side of Christianity, by its rigid adhesion to the human appearance of Christ, which the other denied." Strange as it may seem, these two antithetic systems ran into one another, and had both of them this common ground, that God and man could not be joined; for while the Ebionites said Jesus was a mere man, the Christ remained a pure ideal not connected with the body,

a redemption was effected by God, and Jesus was the symbol; while the Docetæ, denying the body of Jesus had any objective reality, likewise left the Christ a pure ideal, never incarnated. "Both were alike unsatisfactory to the Christian mind. Both left alike unsatisfied the necessity of finding in Christ the union of the human and divine; therefore this objection may be made to both of them, which, from the nature of things, is the most significant, namely, that man is not redeemed by them, for God has not taken the human nature upon himself, and sanctified it by thus assuming it. The church, guided rather by an internal tact and necessity than by any perfect insight, could sketch no comprehensible figure of Christ in definite lines. But by these two extreme doctrines it was advanced so far that it became clearly conscious of the necessity, in general, of conceiving of the Redeemer as divine and human at the same time."

Various elements of this doctrine were expressed by the various teachers in the early ages. Thus, on the divine side it was taught, first, by the Pseudo-Clement, Paul of Samosata, and Sabellius, that a higher power dwelt in Christ; next by Hippolitus, that it was not merely a higher power, but a hypostasis, that dwelt in Christ. Tertullian, Clement, and Dionysius of Alexandria, with Origen, considered this subordinate to the Father, though the latter regarded it as eternally begotten. The next step was to consider this hypostasis not merely subordinate, but eternal; nor this only, but of the same essence with the Father. This was developed in the controversy betwen Dionysius of Rome and of Alexandria; between Athanasius and Arius. At the same time the human side was also developed. Clement and Origen maintained, in opposition to the

Gnostics, that Christ had an actual human body. Then Apollinaris taught that Christ had a human soul (ψυχη), but the Logos supplied the place of a human mind (νους). But in opposition to him, Gregory of Nazianzen taught that he had a human mind also. Thus the elements of the Christ are "speculatively constructed" on the human and divine side; but still all their elments were not united into a human personal character — for the human nature of Christ was still regarded as impersonal. But attempts were made also to unite these parts together, and construct a whole person. This, however, led rather to a mixture than an organic and consistent union; therefore the separateness and distinctness of the two natures also required to be set forth. This was done very clearly. The Council of Nice declared he was perfect God; that of Chalcedon that he was perfect man also, but did not determine how the two natures were reconciled in the same character. "The distinctive character of these two natures"— we quote the words of Leo the Great —"was not taken away by the union, but rather the peculiarity of each nature is kept distinct, and runs together with the other, into one Prosopon and one Hypostasis." * Next follow the attempts to con-

* We give the Greek words *Prosopon* and *Hypostasis*, and not the common terms derived from the Latin. The subtleties of this doctrine can only be expressed in the Greek tongue. A Latin Christian could believe in three *personæ* and one *substantia*, for he had no better terms, while the Greek Christian reckoned this heretical if not atheistical, as he believed in one essence and three substances. But to say three persons — τρια προσωπα — in the Godhead, was heresy in Greece, as to say three substances (*tres substantiæ*) was heresy at Rome. Well says Augustine, apologizing for the Latin language, "dictum est tres personæ, non ut illud diceretur, sed ut non taceretur."— De Trinitate, Lib. V. c. 9.

St. Augustine has some thoughts on this head, which may sur-

struct one person out of these two natures. Some said there was one will, others two wills, in the person of Christ. This was the quarrel of the Monothelites and the Dyothelites. Others said the union was effected by the loss of the attributes of the human, or divine being; some supposing the one passed into and so became the other, or that both coalesced in a *tertium quid*, a συνθετος φυσις. But it became orthodox to affirm that each retained all its peculiar attributes, and so the two were united. Now this doctrine may seem very wise, because it is very puzzling; but the same words may be applied to other things. We have very little skill in showing up absurdities, but can apply all this language to very different matters, and it shall sound quite as well as before. Thus we may take a circle instead of the Father, and a triangle for the son, and say the two natures were found in one, the circle became a triangle, and yet lost none of its circularity, while the triangle became a circle, yet lost

prise some of his followers at this day. "And we recognize in ourselves an image of God, that is, of the Supreme Trinity, not indeed equal, nay, far and widely different; not co-eternal, and (to express the whole more briefly) not of the same substance with God: yet that, than which of all things made by him none in nature is nearer to God; which image is yet to be perfected by re-formation, that it may be nearest in likeness also. For we both are to know that we are to love to be this and to know it. In these then, moreover, no falsehood resembling truth perplexes us."— Civ. Dei, Lib. XI. c. 26, as translated in *Pusey's* ed. of Augustine's Confessions. London: 1840. 1 Vol. 8vo, p. 283, note.

The late Dr. Emmons seems aware of the imperfection of language, and its inability to express the idea of a Trinity. "Indeed there is no word, in any language, which can convey a precise idea of this incomprehensible distinction; for it is not similar to any other distinction in the minds of men, so that it is very immaterial whether we use the name person, or any other name, or a circumlocution instead of a name, in discoursing upon this subject."— Sermon IV. p. 87. Wrentham, 1800.

none of its triangularity. The union of the two was perfect, the distinctive character of each being preserved. They corresponded point for point, area for area, centre for centre, circumference for circumference, yet was one still a circle, the other a triangle. But both made up the circle-triangle. The one was not inscribed, nor the other circumscribed. We would by no means deny the great fact, which we think lies at the bottom of the notion of the Trinity, a fact, however, which it seems to conceal as often as to express in our times, that the Deity diffuses and therefore incarnates himself more or less perfectly in human beings, and especially in Jesus, the climax of human beings, through whom "proceed" the divine influences, which also "proceed" from the Father. Hence the doctrine of the Holy Ghost. This truth, we think, is expressed in all religions; in the incarnations of Vishnu; the polytheistic notions of the Greeks; the angels, archangels, and seraphs, that make up the Amshaspand of the Persians, which Daniel seems to imitate, and the author of the Apocalypse to have in his eye.

But to return. These points fixed, the Catholic church dwelt chiefly on the divine in Christ, and continued to do so till the Reformation, while the human side was represented by heretics and mystics, whom here we have not space to name.

We now pass over some centuries, in which there was little life and much death in the church — times when the rays of religious light, as they came through the darkness, fell chiefly, it seems, on men whom the light rendered suspicious to the church — and come down to times after the Reformation. After the great battles had been fought through, and the Council of Trent held its sessions, and the disturbances incident

to all great stirs of thought had passed over, and the oriental and one-sided view of Christ's nature had been combated, the human side of it comes out once more into its due prominence. "By the long one-sided contemplation of the divine in Christ, his person came to stand as somewhat absolutely supernatural, as the other side of and beyond human nature; something perfectly inaccessible to the subjective thought, while it is the greatest thing in Christianity to recognize our brother in him." With the Reformation there had come a subjective tendency, which laid small stress on the old notions of Christ, in which the objective divine nature had overlaid and crushed the subjective and human nature in him. This new subjective tendency is a distinctive feature of the Reformation. It shows itself in the doctrine of justification by faith, and quite as powerfully in the altered form of Christology. But here, too, we must tread with rapid feet, and rest on only two of the numerous systems of this period, one from the reformers themselves, the other from a theosophist. The human nature is capable of divinity (humana natura divinitatis capax), said the early Protestants; what Christ has first done all may do afterwards. Well said Martin Luther, strange as it may seem to modern Protestants, who learn ecclesiastical history from the "library of useful knowledge," [15] "lo, Christ takes our birth (that is, the sinfulness of human nature) from us unto himself, and sinks it in his birth, and gives us his, that we thereby may become pure and new, as if it were our own, so that every Christian may enjoy this birth of Christ not less than if he also, like Jesus, were born bodily of the Virgin Mary. Whoso disbelieves or doubts this, the same is no Christian." Again: "This is the meaning of

Esaias, to us a child is born, to us a son is given. To us, to us, to us is he born, and to us given. Therefore look to it, that thou not only gettest out of the Evangel a fondness for the history itself, but that thou makest his birth thine own, and exchangest with him, becomest free from thy birth, and passest over to his — then thou indeed shalt sit in the lap of the Virgin Mary, and art her dear child." This thought lay at the background of the Reformation, which itself was but an imperfect exhibition of that great principle. He that will look finds traces of the action of this same principle in the Greek revival of religion five centuries before Christ; in the numerous mystical sects from the first century to the Reformation; in such writers as Ruysbröck, Harphius, Meister Eckhart, Suso, Tauler, the St. Victors, and many others. Perhaps it appears best in that little book, once well known in England under the title Theologia Germanica,[16] and now studied in Germany, and called Deutsche Theologie; a book of which Luther says, in the preface to his edition of it, in 1520, "Next to the Bible and St. Augustine, I have never met with a book from which I have learnt more what God, Christ, man, and all things are. Read this little book who will, and then say whether our theology is old or new; for this little book is not new."

We give a few words from it relating to the incarnation of God, for the private ear of such as think all is new which they never heard of before, and all naughty things exist only in modern German. It says man comes to a state of union with God "when he feels and loves no longer this or that, or his own self, but only the eternal good; so likewise God loves not himself as himself, but as the eternal good, and if there

were somewhat better than God, then God would love that. The same takes place in a divine man, or one united with God, else he is not united with him. This state existed in Christ in all its perfection, else he would not be the Christ. If it were possible that a man should be perfect and entire, in true obedience be as the human nature of Christ was, that man would be one with Christ, and would be by grace what he was by nature. Man in this state of obedience would be one with God, for he would be not himself but God's own (Eigen), and God himself would then alone become man. Christ is to you not merely the objective, isolated in his sublimity, but we are all called to this, that God should become man in us. He that believes in Christ believes that his (Christ's) life is the noblest and best of all lives, and so far as the life of Christ is man, so far also is Christ in him." In this book — and its ideas are as old in this shape as the time of Dionysius the Areopagite — the historical Christ is only the primitive type, the divine idea of man, who appears only as a model for us, and we may be all that he was, and we are Christians only in so far as we attain this. It is only on this hypothesis, we take it, that there can be a Christology which does not abridge the nature of man.* This same idea — that all men

* Dr Bauer, a very able Trinitarian writer and Professor at Tübingen, sums up the various Christological theories in this way: Reconcilation must be regarded, either, (1) as a necessary process in the development of the Deity himself, as he realizes the idea of his being; or, (2) as an analogous and necessary process in the development of man, as he becomes reconciled with himself, the one is wholly objective, the other wholly subjective; or, (3) as the mediation of a *tertium quid*, which holds the human and divine natures both, so involves both the above. In this case reconcilation rests entirely on the historical fact, which must be regarded as the necessary condition of reconcila-

are capable of just the same kind and degree of union with God which Jesus attained to — runs through all the following Christologies. It appears in a modified form in Osiander and Schwenkfeld, whom we shall only name.* But they all place the historical below the internal Christ which is formed in the heart, and here commences what Dr. Dorner calls the degeneracy of the principle of the Reformers, though the antithesis between nature and grace was still acknowledged by the Protestants. But as our author thinks, the subjective view received a one-sided development, especially in Servetus and the Socinians, who differ however in this at least, that while the former, in his pantheistic way, allows Christ to be in part uncreated (res increata), the latter considers him certainly a created being to whom God had imparted the divine attributes.

We pass over Theophrastus and Paracelsus, and give a few extracts from Valentine Weigel's "Güldene Griff." With him, man is an epitome of the whole world — a favorite notion with many mystics — all his knowledge is self-knowledge. "The eye, by which all things are seen, is man himself, but only in reference to natural knowledge; for in supernatural knowledge man himself is not the eye, but God himself is both the light and the eye in us. Our eye therefore must be passive, and not active. Yet God is not foreign

tion between God and man; of course he, who takes this latter view, considers Jesus as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. See his Die Christliche Lehre von der Versohnung in ihrer geschichtliche Entwickelung, etc. Tübingen, 1838.

* See Osiander's Confessio de unico Mediatore J. C. et justificatione fidei, 1551. His Epistola in qua confutantur, etc., 1549. See also Schwenkfeld Quæstiones von Erkentnis J. C. und seiner Glorien, 1561, von der Speyse des ewigen Lebens, 1547. Schwenkfeld's Christology agrees closely, in many respects, with that of Swedenborg.

to men in whom he is the eye, but that passive relation of man to him has this significance, that man is the yielding influence by which God becomes the seeing eye." This light in us, or the word, is for him the true Christ, and the historical God-man disappears entirely in the background. The book whence all wisdom comes is God's word, a book written by the finger of God in the heart of all men, though all cannot read it. Out of this are all books written. This book of life, to which the sacred scriptures are an external testimony, is the likeness of God in man, the seed of God, the light, the word, the Son, Christ. This book lies concealed in the heart, concealed in the flesh, concealed in the letter of scriptures. But if it were not in the heart, it could not be found in the flesh and the scripture. If this were not preached within us, if it were not always within us — though in unbelief — we could have nothing of it. A doctrine common enough with the fathers of the first three or four centuries. If we had remained in Paradise, we should never have needed the outward word of scripture, or the historical incarnation of Jesus.* But expelled from Paradise, and fallen through sin, it is needful that we be born again of Christ, for we have lost the holy flesh and the Holy Ghost, and must recover both from Christ. Because we cannot read this inner book, God will alter our spirit by scriptures and sermons. All books are only for fallen men. Christ was necessary to the race, as the steel to the

* Quaint George Herbert has a similar thought. We quote from memory.

> "For sure when Adam did not know
> To sin, or sin to smother,
> He might to Heaven from Paradise go,
> As from one room to another."

stone, but his office is merely that of a prophet and preacher of righteousness, for God was incarnate in Abel, Noah, Adam, and Abraham, as well as in Jesus, "and the Lord from Heaven" exists potentially in all men; the external Christ, who was born of Mary, is an expressive and visible model of the internal Christ. In a word, he makes Christ the universal divine spirit shed down into man, though it lies buried and immovable in most men. But whenever it comes to consciousness, and is lived out, there is an incarnation of God.

These views are shared by many teachers, who modify them more or less, of whom we need mention but a few of the more prominent: Poiret, Henry More, Bishops Fowler and Gastrell, Robert Fleming, Hussey, Bennet, Thomas Burnet, Goodwin, and Isaac Watts.*

This mystical view appears in Jacob Bœhme, and through him it passed on to philosophy, for it is absurd to deny that this surprising man has exerted an influence in science as deep almost as in religion. German philosophy seems to be the daughter of mysticism.

But we must make a long leap from Valentine Weigel to Immanuel Kant, who has had an influence on Christology that will never pass away. It came as a thunder-bolt out of the sky, to strike down the phantoms of doubt and scatter the clouds of scepticism. Kant admits that in practice and the actual life of man, the moral law is subordinate to sensuality;

* See, who will, his three discourses "on the Glory of Christ as God-man" (Lond. 1746), and Goodwin's book to which he refers, "Knowledge of God the Father and his Son J. C." See also the writings of Edward Irving, Cudworth's Sermon before the House of Parliament, in the American edition of his works, Vol. II. p. 549, seq.

this subordination he calls radical evil. Then to perfect mankind we need a radical restoration, to restore the principles to their true order from which they have been inverted; this restoration is possible on three conditions: 1. By the idea of a race of men that is well-pleasing to God, in which each man would feel his natural destination and perfectibility. It is the duty of each to rise to this, believe it attainable, and trust its power. This state may not be attained empirically, but by embracing the principle well-pleasing to God; and all the faults in manifesting this principle vanish, when the whole course is looked at. We should not be disturbed by fear lest the new moral disposition be transient, for the power of goodness increases with the exercise of it. The past sins are expiated only by suffering, or diminution of well-being in the next stage of progress. 2. The foundation of a moral commonwealth *— without this there will be confusion. This is possible only on condition that it is religious also. Thus this commonwealth is at the same time a church, though only an ideal one; for it can rest on nothing external, but only on the "unconditional authority of reason, which contains in itself the moral idea." 3. This ideal church, to become real, must take a statutory form, for it is a universal tendency of man to demand a sensual confirmation of the truth of reason, and this renders it necessary to take some outward means of introducing the true rational religion, since, without the hypothesis of a revelation, man would have no confidence in reason, though it disclosed the same truth with revelation,

* It is a saying of Pagan Plato in the Timæus, "We shall never have perfect men until we can surround them with perfect circumstances," an idea the English Socialists are attempting to carry out in a very one-sided manner.

because it is so difficult to convince men that pure morality is the only service of God, while they seek to make it easier by some superstitious service (afterdienst).

On these notions the following Christology is naturally constructed. Man needs no outward aid for the purpose of reconcilation, sanctification, or happiness; but the belief in an outward revelation is needed for the basis of the moral commonwealth. Christianity can allow this, as it has a pure moral spirit. Here everything turns on the person of its founder. He demands perfect virtue, and would found a kingdom of God on the earth. It is indifferent to practical religion, whether or not we are certain of his historical existence, for historical existence adds no authority. The historical is necessary only to give us an idea of a man well-pleasing to God, which we can only understand by seeing it realized in a man who preserves his morality under the most difficult circumstances. To get a concrete knowledge of supersensual qualities, such as the idea of the good, moral actions must be presented to us performed in a human manner. This is only needed to awaken and purify moral emotions that live in us. The historical appearance of a man without sin is possible; but it is not necessary to consider he is born supernaturally, even if the impossibility of the latter is not absolutely demonstrable. But since the archetype of a man well-pleasing to God lies in us in an incomprehensible manner, what need have we of further incomprehensibilities, since the exaltation of such a saint above all the imperfections of human nature would only offer an objection to his being a model for us — since it gives him not an achieved but an innate virtue — for it would make the

distance between him and us so great that we should find in him no proof that we could ever attain that ideal. Even if the great teacher does not completely correspond to the idea, he may yet speak of himself as if the ideal of the good was bodily and truly represented in him, for he could speak of what his maxims would make him. He must derive his whole strength from reason. The value of his revelation consists only in leading to a conscious, voluntary morality, in the way of authority. When this is done, the statutory scaffolding may fall. The time must come when religion shall be freed from all statutes, which rest only on history, and pure reason at last reign, and God be all in all. Wise men must see that belief in the Son of God is only belief in man himself; that the human race, so far as it is moral, is the well-pleasing Son of God. This idea of a perfect man does not proceed from us, but from God, so we say that he has condescended and taken human nature upon himself. The Christ without and the Christ within us are not two principles, but the same. But if we make a belief in the historical manifestation of this idea of humanity in Christ the necessary condition of salvation, then we have two principles, an empiric and a rational one. The true God-man is the archetype that lies in our reason, to which the historical manifestation conforms.

This system has excellences and defects. By exalting the idea of moral goodness, Kant led men to acknowledge an absolute spiritual power, showing that this is the common ground between philosophy and Christianity, and with this begins the reconciliation of the two.* He recognized the divine as something

* Leibnitz made the attempt to effect the same thing, but in a manner more mechanical and unsatisfactory.

dwelling in man, and therefore filled up the chasm, as it were, between the two natures. Again, he acknowledged no authority so long as it was merely outward and not legitimated in the soul, for he had felt the slavery incident upon making the historical a dogma. He saw the mind cannot be bound by anything merely external, for that has value only so far as it contains the idea and makes it historical. But, on the other hand, he exalts the subjective too high, and does not legitimate the internal moral law, which Dr. Dorner thinks requires legitimating as much as the historical manifestation. His foundation therefore is unstable until this is done. Besides he is not consistent with himself; for while he ascribes absolute power to this innate ideal of a perfect man, he leaves nothing for the historical appearance of the God-man. He makes his statutory form useless, if not injurious, and makes a dualistic antithesis between reason and God. Still more is it inconsistent with Christianity, for it makes morality the whole of religion; it cuts off all connection between the divine and human life by denying that influence comes down from God upon man. He makes each man his own redeemer, and allows no maturity of excellence, but only a growth towards it. In respect to the past, present, and future, it leaves men no comfort in their extremest need.

We pass next to the Christology of Schelling, leaping over such thinkers as Röhr, Wegscheider, De Wette, Hase, Hamann, Oettinger, Franz Baader, Novalis, Jacobi and Fichte.

The divine unity is always actualizing itself; the one is constantly passing into the many; or in plain English, God is eternally creative. God necessarily reveals himself in the finite; to be comprehensible to

us, he must take the limitations of finite existence. But since he cannot be represented in any finite form, the divine life is portrayed in a variety of individuals; in a copious history, each portion whereof is a revelation of a particular side of the divine life. God therefore appears in historical life as the finite, which is the necessary form of the revelation of him. The finite is God in his development, or the Son of God. All history, therefore, has a higher sense. The human does not exclude the divine. Thus the idea of the incarnation of God is a principle of philosophy; and since this is the essence of Christianity, philosophy is reconciled with it. Nature herself points forward to the Son of God, and has in him its final cause. Now the theologians consider Christ as a single person; but, as an eternal idea alone can be made a dogma, so their Christology is untenable as a dogma. Now the incarnation of God is from eternity. Christ is an eternal idea. The divinity of Christianity cannot be proved in an empirical way, but only by contemplating the whole history as a divine act. The sacred history must be to us only a subjective symbol, not an objective one, as such things were to the Greeks, who thereby became subordinate to the finite, and refused to see the infinite, except in that form. But as Christianity goes immediately to the infinite, so the finite becomes only an allegory of the infinite. The fundamental idea of Christianity is eternal and universal, therefore it cannot be constructed historically without the religious construction of history. This idea existed before Christianity, and is a proof of its necessity. Its existence is a prediction of Christianity in a distant foreign country. The man Christ is the climax of this incarnation, and also the beginning of

it; for all his followers are to be incarnations of God, members of the same body to which he is the head. God first becomes truly objective in him, for before him none has revealed the infinite in such a manner. The old world is the natural side of history. A new era, in which the infinite world preponderates, could only be brought by the truly infinite coming into the finite, not to deify it, but to sacrifice it to God, and thereby effect a reconciliation; that is, by his death he showed that the finite is nothing; but the true existence and life is only in the infinite. The eternal Son of God is the human race; created out of the substance of the Father of all; appearing as a suffering divinity, exposed to the horrors of time, reaching its highest point in Christ; it closes the world of the finite and discloses that of the infinite, as the sign of the spirit. With this conclusion, the mythological veils in which Christ as the only God-man has been arrayed must fall off. The ever-living spirit will clothe Christianity in new and permanent forms. Speculation, not limited by the past, but comprehending distinction as it stretches far on into time, has prepared for the regeneration of esoteric Christianity and the proclamation of the absolute gospel. Viewed in this light, Christianity is not regarded merely as doctrine or history, but as a progressive divine act; the history of Christ is not merely an empirical and single, but an eternal history. At the same time it finds its anti-type in the human race. Christianity, therefore, is not merely one religious constitution among others, but the religion; the true mode of spiritual existence, the soul of history, which is incorporated in the human race to organize it into one vast body whose head is Christ. Thus he would make us all brothers of Christ, and show that the in-

carnation of God still goes on to infinity in the birth of the Son of God, until the divine life takes to itself the whole human race, sanctifies and penetrates all through it, and recognizes it as his body of which Christ is the head; as his temple of which Christ is the corner-stone. We shall not dwell upon the excellence of this view, nor point out its defects. The few who understand the mystical words of St. John, and the many who do not understand them, can do this for themselves.

Our remarks are already so far extended that we must omit the Christology of Hegel, though this, however, we do with the less reluctance, as the last word of that system has but just reached us; it comes with the conclusion of Strauss's work on Dogmatics.* We regret to pass over the views of Schleiermacher which have had so deep an influence in Germany, and among many of the more studious of our Trinitarian brethren in this country. To most of our own denomination only the Lemnian horrors of its faint echo have come. We give Dr. Dorner's conclusion in his own words. "Christology has now reached a field as full of anticipations as it is of decisions. But the anxiety which here takes possession of us is a joyful one, and bears in itself the tranquil and certain conviction that, after a long night, a beautiful dawn is nigh. A great course has been run through, and the deep presentiments of the greatest minds of the primitive times of Christianity begin to find their scientific realization. After long toil of the human mind, the time has at last come when a rich harvest is to be reaped from this dogma, while the union, already hastening, is effected between the

* Die Christliche Glaubenslehre, etc. Von Dr. D. F. Strauss. 2 vols. 8vo. 1840, 1841.

essential elements of Christology which seem the most hostile to each other. Previous Christologies have chiefly presented these elements in their separation and opposition to one another. Now, while we contemplate them together in their living unity, which verifies their distinction from one another, we see their historical confirmation and necessity, and now, as Ethiopia and Arabia, according to the prophet, were to present their homage to the Lord, as must the middle ages, with their scholasticism and modern philosophy, the whole of history — as well of the ante-christian religons, as that of the Christian dogma — assemble about the one (the Son of Man), that they may lay down their best gifts before him who first enables them to understand themselves; while, on the other hand, he confers on them the dignity of his own glorification, and allows them to contribute to it, so that by their service, likewise, his character shall pass into the consciousness of the human race with an increasing brilliancy."

Now, if we ask what are the merits and defects of the work we have passed over, the answer is easy. It is a valuable history of Christology; as such, it is rich with instructions and suggestions. A special history of this matter was much needed. That this, in all historical respects, answers the demands of the times, we are not competent to decide. However, if it be imperfect as a history, it has yet great historical merits. Its chief defects are of another kind. Its main idea is this, that the true Christ is perfect God and perfect man, and that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Christ. Now, he makes no attempt to prove either point; yet he was bound, in the first instance, as a philosopher, to prove his proposition; in the second, as an historian, to verify his fact. He attempts

neither. He has shown neither the eternal necessity, nor the actual existence of a God-man. Nay, he admits that only two writers in the New Testament ever represent Jesus as the God-man. His admission is fatal to his fact. He gives us the history of a dogma of the church; but does not show it has any foundation to rest on.

We must apply to this book the words of Leibnitz, in his letter to Burnet, on the manner of establishing the Christian religion.* "I have often remarked, as well in philosophy as theology, and even in medicine, jurisprudence, and history, that we have many good books, and good thoughts, scattered about here and there, but that we scarce ever come to establishments. I call it an establishment, when at least certain points are determined and fixed for ever; when certain theses are put beyond dispute, and thus ground is gained where something may be built. It is properly the method of mathematicians, who separate the certain from the uncertain, the known from the unknown. In other departments it is rarely followed, because we love to flatter the ears by fine words, which make an agreeable mingling of the certain and the uncertain. But it is a very transient benefit that is thus conferred; like music and the opera, which leave scarce any trace in the mind, and give us nothing to repose on; so we are always turning round and round, treating the same questions in the same way, which is problematic, and subject to a thousand exceptions. Somebody once led M. Casaubon the elder into a hall of the Sarbonne, and told him the divines have disputed here for more than three hundred years! He answered, and what have they decided? It is exactly what happens to

* Opp. ed. Dutens., Vol. VI. p. 243, seq.

us in most of our studies. . . . I am confident that if we will but use the abilities wherewith God and nature have furnished us, we can remove many of the evils which now oppress mankind, can establish the truth of religion, and put an end to many controversies which divide men, and cause so much evil to the human race, if we are willing to think consecutively, and proceed as we ought. . . . I would proceed in this way, and distinguish propositions into two classes: 1. What could be absolutely demonstrated by a metaphysical necessity, and in an incontestable way: 2. what could be demonstrated morally; that is, in a way which gives what is called moral certainty, as we know there is a China and a Peru, though we have never seen them. . . . Theological truths and deductions therefrom are also of two kinds. The first rest on definitions, axioms, and theorems derived from true philosophy and natural theology; the second rest in part on history and events, and in part on the interpretation of texts, on the genuineness and divinity of our sacred books, and even on ecclesiastical antiquity; in a word, on the sense of the texts." And, again:* "We must demonstrate rigorously the truth of natural religion, that is, the existence of a being supremely powerful and wise, and the immortality of the soul. These two points solidly fixed, there is but one step more to take — to show, on the one hand, that God could never have left man without a true religion; and on the other, that no known religion can compare with the Christian. The necessity of embracing it is a consequence of these two plain truths. However, that the victory may be still more complete, and the mouth of impiety be shut for ever, I cannot

* Epistola II. ad Spizelium. Opp. v. p. 344.

forbear hoping that some man skilled in history, the tongues, and philosophy, in a word, filled with all sorts of erudition, will exhibit all the harmony and beauty of the Christian religion, and scatter for ever the countless objections which may be brought against its dogmas, its books, and its history."

## VIII

## THE EXCELLENCE OF GOODNESS

"And the king said, He is a good man." — 2 SAM. xviii, 27.

At the bottom of all things there is a law. Kings are made to act in a certain manner, and not otherwise. Thus the rock is made to be solid and the water to be fluid, under certain conditions, and not the reverse. This law, here and everywhere, is perfect. It is the work of God. All law is the will of God; it is God in action, for God is not a mere abstraction, but is concreted in part, so to say, in the world we look upon. He is not only the other side of the universe, but here; here and now, as much here as anywhere. He is immanent in creation, and yet transcends creation. Suppose all created worlds were struck out of existence, God does not cease to be; does not cease to be here, for he transcends all the created worlds. But they cannot exist without God. You cannot, without a contradiction, conceive of them devoid of God, for he is immanent therein. Without his continual presence to preserve, as well as his transient presence to create they would cease to be. Indeed the existence of these things is, as it were, but a continual creation.

This being so, God being in all, in essence no less than in power, active in each — smallest and greatest — and active too with no let or hindrance of his infinity, the world becomes a revelation of God, so far as these material things can disclose and reveal the Infinite One. But these are to us only a revelation

of something kindred to qualities that are awakened in ourselves. Hence all men do not see the same things revealed therein. The world, or the smallest particle thereof, reveals God's power, his wisdom and his goodness. It reveals these attributes in just that order to mankind. In the history of our consciousness we come, in the order of time, to understand force sooner than wisdom, and that before goodness. The natural man is before the spiritual man. Mankind represents in its large process the same things which you and I represent in our smaller story. In a few years of our early life we must climb through all the stages which the human race has passed by in its sixty centuries; else we are not up to the level that mankind has reached in our day.

Watching the progress of ideas in history, we see that mankind began as we do, and goes on as we have gone; and first became conscious of God's power; next of his wisdom; of his goodness last of all. We see out of us only what we are internally prepared to see; for seeing depends on the harmony between the object without and your own condition within. Hence no two of us see the same things in the sun and moon and stars; hence some men see only God's power in the world; others, his wisdom also; and others still his goodness crowning all the rest.

Had we some active quality as much transcending goodness as that surpasses physical force, we should see in the world, I doubt not, still further revelations of God; qualities higher than goodness. In him there may be, must be, other qualities greater than goodness, only you and I can now have no conception thereof, not having analogous qualities active in ourselves. It is by no means to be supposed that our

ideas of God exhaust the character and nature of God; nor even that the material world reveals now to us all of him which it might reveal had we a higher nature, or a larger development of the nature we have. The limit of our finite comprehension is no bound to the Infinite God. If a bear were to look at a watch, he might notice the glitter of the metal, perhaps attend to its constant click. But the contrivance of the watch he would not see nor yet its use, not having in himself the qualities to appreciate, or even apprehend, that contrivance or that use. How inadequate a conception must he have both of the watch and the man who made it! So it is with us in our application of the world and its Maker. We are all in this respect but as bears.

Now men admire in God what they admire in themselves. It is so unavoidably. You may see three periods in man's history. In the first bodily force is most highly prized. Here the hero is the strongest man; he who can run the swiftest, and strike the hardest; is fearless and cruel. In that state men conceive mostly of a God of force. He is a man of war. He thunders and lightens. He rides on the wind, is painted with thunderbolts in his hand. He sends the plague and famine. The wheels of his chariot rattle in war. What represents force is a type of him. In some primitive nations their name of God meant only the strong, the powerful.

Then as men advance a little, there comes a period in which intellectual power or wisdom is prized above bodily force. Men esteem its superiority, for they see that one wise head is a match for many strong bodies. It can command ten weak men to overcome a strong one, whom singly they dared not touch; but

no aggregation of foolish men, however numerous, can ever outwit a single wise man, for no combination of many little follies can ever produce wisdom. In this stage he is the hero who has the most intellectual power; knows the secrets of nature; has skill to rule men; speaks wise sayings: Saul, the tallest man, has given place to Solomon, the wisest man. The popular conception of God changes to suit this stage of growth. Men see his wisdom; they see it in the birth of a child, in the course of the sun and moon; in the return of the seasons; in the instinct of the emmet or the ostrich: God works the wonders of nature. Wisdom is the chief attribute in this age ascribed to God. Who shall teach him? says the contemplative man of this age — where the sage of a former day would have asked, who can overcome him?

There comes yet another period, in which moral power is appreciated. He is the hero who sees moral truth, walks uprightly, subordinates his private will to the universal law, tells the truth, is reverent and pious, loves goodness and lives it. The saint has become the hero; he rules not by superior power of hand, or superior power of head, but by superior power of heart — by justice, truth, and love; in one word, by righteousness. "The Queen of Sheba came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon," said Jesus, "but behold a greater than Solomon is here." In this period, men form a higher conception of God. Men believe that he is not only wise, but good; he loves men; he loves justice, goodness, truth, demands mercy and not sacrifice; he keeps his word, and is an upright God. He is no longer regarded as the God of the Mosaic law, jealous, revengeful, exacting; but as a Father of in-

finite goodness. In one word, God is love. He is not a man of war, nor a worker of wonders barely, but a Savior. The Jewish name of God — Jehovah — does not appear in the New Testament! Read the Old Testament and New Testament in connection, you will see this twofold progress in the state of man, and these divergent conceptions of God. However, you will not find them distinctly separated, as in this sketch; you must estimate them by their centre and types, not by their circumference, for in nature and in human affairs there are no classes of things, but only individuals, which we group into classes for convenience in understanding their relations one to another. But these facts are suggestive to such as think.

It was said there is a law at the bottom of all things; that this law is the will of God, who is immanent in nature, and yet transcends nature; that it is God in action. The same rule holds good in relation to mankind. Here also is a law. God is immanent in man as much as in nature, yet as much transcending man. This is a doctrine of the Bible, and appears in various forms in all the more spiritual sects of Christians. But we are conscious and free, having power to keep the law, or to a certain extent to violate it; we are not merely to be governed as the material world — but to be self-governed. As conscious and free beings it is our duty to keep this law; to keep it knowingly and voluntarily, not merely because we should as duty, but also, and no less, because we would as desire; thus bringing the whole of our nature into obedience to God. This our duty is our welfare too. Now goodness is the keeping of this law; the keeping thereof knowingly and joyfully, with the hand, with the head, with the heart. Goodness is conformity with

God in the matter of self-government. In its highest form it is a conscious conformity therewith, and so is religion. The good man puts himself in a line with God, in unison with him. He accords with God, and works after where God has worked before. In the matter of self-government he is consciously one with God; for God's law acts through him, and by him, with no let nor hindrance.

Now we do not always appreciate the excellence of goodness. We seldom believe in its power. Mankind has been struggling here on the earth six thousand years — perhaps much longer — who knows? Yet even now, few men see more than signs of God's power and wisdom in the world. Most men stop at the first. The force of muscles they understand better than the force of mind, and that better than the excellence of justice, uprightness, truth, and love. So it has become a political maxim to trust a man of able intellect sooner than a just and good man of humbler mind. Most men, perhaps, tremble before a God who can destroy the world to-morrow, and send babes new-born to endless hell, far more than they rejoice in a God who rules by perfect justice, truth, and love, who to-day blesses whatever he has made, and will at last bless them all more abundantly than thought can fancy or heart can wish.

We bow before the man of great capabilities of thought, of energetic mind, of deep creative genius. Yet is the good man greater than the wise man — taking wisdom in its common sense of intellectual power, capacity of thought; greater and nobler far! He rests on a greater idea. He lives in a larger and loftier sentiment. Yet I would not undervalue intellectual power. Who of us does not reverence a man

that has the understanding of things; whose capacious mind grasps up the wonders of this earth, its animals and plants, its stones and trees; which measures the heavens, and tells the wonders of the stars, the open secret of the universe; knows the story of man; is possessed of the ideas that rule the world; has gathered the wisdom of the past, and feels that of the present throb mightily within his heart? Who does not honor that capaciousness of thought which sees events in their causes, can rule a nation as you your household, forecasting its mighty destinies, and that for centuries of years, and moulding the fate of millions yet to come? Who does not appreciate the man who can speak what all feel, but feel dumbly, and can't express; who enchants us with great thoughts which we know to be our own, but could not say them; the man who holds the crowd or the nation breathless, pausing at his thought, and sways them to and fro as sway the waters underneath the moon? Who will not honor the poetic mind which tells the tale of our life, and paints to us in rhythmic speech the rocks, the trees, the wind singing melodious in every pine, the brook melting adown its sinuous course; which tells anew the story of our hopes and fears, our passions, tears, and loves, and paints the man so very like, he trembles but to recognize himself? Who does not honor the man of vast mind, who concentrates in himself the ideas and sentiments of an age, and shoots them forth far on into the darkness of the coming time, a stream of light, dazzling and electric too, where millions come and light their little torch, and kindle with its touch their household fire? I would not undervalue this power of thought, the mind's creative skill. It is not the meanest ambition to seek to rise above the mass

of men in this, and rule not o'er their bodies but o'er their minds, by power of thought, and live a king for many a hundred years. It is the "last infirmity" of noble men. There is a magnificence in force of mind which may well bid us all look up to admire, and bow down to do homage. It is vast and awful even when alone, not wedded with a noble heart. I would be the last to undervalue this.

But it is little compared to the power of goodness — the resting, living in those ever fair ideas which we call justice, right, religion, truth — it is very little and very poor. In time we confess it is so of each great but wicked man of thought. Men who stood aghast, awed by the terrific mind of Cæsar, of Cromwell, of Napoleon, come at length to see that a single good man, who conforms with God, yields to no temptation, harbors no revenge — not railing when mocked at, not paying back scorn for scorn; who is able to stand alone amid the desertion of friends, and the ribald mockery of the public mind, serenely lifting up a forehead blameless and unabashed to men and God; who lives in the law of the just, the good, the holy, and the true — is greater than all Cæsars, all Cromwells, all Napoleons. His power is real, not depending on the accident of a throne or an army, and as the most ancient heaven, is permanent and strong, resting on the same foundation with them — the law of God. He lives in his undying powers.

Ask yourself what is it that makes you admire this or that great man? Is it what is highest in you, or what is lowest? Is it your best quality? If not, then is your admiration not of the best things in man, for the quality you admire in him is only an enlargement of the same quality in yourself? Your little hon-

ors his much, and if your little is not of your best, no more is his much. It is dangerous to admire what it is not safe to love.

Now all things in nature league with the good man; her symbols and her soothing influence are on virtue's side. So are the highest sentiments that flash as lightning on your mind in some great hour — the sunrise of the soul. Goodness unites all men. It hinders no other man's goodness, for it is not selfish; rests on nothing private, personal to you or me, but on what is universal, patent to the world. It is badness that separates, makes man afraid of his brother, jealous and exclusive. Badness rests on somewhat private, and personal to you and me. It seeks its own; only its own welfare. There cannot be a community of misers and cut-throats. They must lay aside their miserly and murderous principles before they can live together. Birds of prey never go in flocks; they are grasping, each takes before the other. It is a social nature that unites in groups the harmless sheep, the ox, the horse. It is not this, but famine, stern necessity, that crowds hyenas and wolves together into bands, when they would bring down some beast of noble mark. Spiders cannot work together harmonious as silk-worms. They bite and devour one another.*

When a good man commences his career of goodness, sceptics will doubt and bigots will oppose him. These men have no faith in goodness, only in cunning or in force. But the great heart of mankind will beat with

* It is said that some French philosophers, irreligiously disregarding this hint of nature, shut up a great quantity of spiders, in hopes of obtaining a material finer than silk, and in quantities proportionate to the spider's energy. But the spiders quarrelled more than they spun, and in a few days there was but one spider left.

him. Even men indebted to sin will forsake their old tyrants, and welcome him to their arms, confessing their former life a mistake and a grievous curse. By-and-by the world rolls round to his side, and the longer it stands the more will his ideas prevail, for the world is going a pilgrimage towards the truth.

The secret history of the world is a contest between ideas of goodness and badness. We sometimes think it is all over with goodness; but it gets the better continually. What is bad dies out, perishing slowly in the ages. What is good lives for ever. A truth is never obsolete. All nature is really leagued against selfishness; for God is the author of nature, and there is no devil. A selfish nation digs its own grave; if strong it digs it all the deeper, and the more secure. That is the lesson which Rome teaches the world. A selfish party in the nation does the same thing. A selfish man in society seems to succeed, but his success is ruin. He has poisoned his own bread. For all that is ill got he must pay back tenfold. God is not mocked. The man laughs that he has escaped a duty. Poor, blind man! a curse has fallen on him; it cleaves to his bones. Justice has feet like wool, so noiseless you hear not her steps; but her hands are hands of iron, and where God lays them down it is not in man to lift them up.

A moral man, from the height of his idea, looks down on the world and sees the cause, process, and result of all this. He sees that the bad man has conjured up a fiend to stand always beside him, corrupting his dainties; while all the foes that attack a good man are, by the magic wand of his goodness, transformed to angels which encamp about his dwelling-place to guard him from sloth and pride. For all

good actions, sentiments, and thoughts, a tenfold recompense is paid him here. We all know the history of Cæsar, the fortunes of Cromwell, the story of Napoleon — men that towered over the world as giants of vast intellectual force, of comparatively little goodness, of little power of heart. What if one had the head of Napoleon and the heart of Fenelon; if such an one should rise amongst us, should be a senator of these United States, their president — what an effect would it have on us, on the nations of the world, on millions yet unborn! What a monument would he build — that should last perennially fair when the pyramids shall have crumbled into dust; what a furrow of light would his name leave behind him in the world! How would he elevate our notions of a man — yes, our notions of God! To be ruled by such an one would be the beginning of freedom. What advance should we make in the qualities of a man! Nature would be on his side, and God none the less. If it be not the meanest ambition to rule over men's minds by the power of thought — but a great excellency, as the world goes — what shall be said of the desire to live in men's hearts by the magic of goodness; the ambition to lead all men to be brothers, to conform with God, to live by his law, and be blessed by the freedom of obedience, and so be one with him? Why, words cannot paint the excellence of that zeal of a seraphic soul.

Goodness is the service of God. The good heart, the good life are the best, the only sacrifice that he demands. When men saw mainly the power of God, trembling thereat, they made sacrifice of things dearest to them, to bribe their God as to appease a cruel king. "Come not empty-handed before thy God," said the

priest. Even now, many a man who sees also the wisdom of God, and bows before him as the soul of thought, will sacrifice reason, conscience, and good sense, as Abraham would offer Isaac, and as Solomon slew sheep and goats. They think God loves tears and hates smiles; so they pay him with gloom, gloomy Sundays and gloomy weeks, and most despairing and melancholy prayers. How many think religion to consist of this. Belief is the sign of their Christianity and its only proof! No doubt there are, practically speaking, two parts of religion: piety the sentiment, morality the expression, a revelation of that sentiment as the world is a revelation of God. Piety is the in-ness of morality, as morality is the out-ness of piety. No doubt there are two parts of service to God, namely, faith and love within the man, works and goodness without the man. If faithful love be in the man, works of goodness must needs appear in his manifested life. If not, who shall assure us that faith and love exist within? a good tree is known by its good fruit. It is of more importance that the tree be good, than it be called by a good name.

Now one of the sacramental sins of the Christian churches has been to lay the main stress on expressions of faith, on devotion or belief. If they laid the main stress on real piety that were well, for it would be making the tree good, when, of course, its fruit would be also good. Piety is love of God with the mind and heart; he who has this must conform to God in his self-government, so far as he knows God's will. But piety cannot be forced. It eludes the eye. It will not be commanded nor obey the voice of the charmer. So the churches early insisted that belief and devotion were the main things of Christianity. They told men

what to believe — how to be devout. They gave men a creed for their belief, and a form or a rite for their devotion. The whole thing was brought into the outer court — placed under the eye of the priest. Behold Christianity made easy; the power of God and the wisdom of God, and God's goodness too, become a stumbling-block and foolishness to the Christians themselves! None was accounted a Christian but a conformist to the ways of man. He only was a Christian who believed the popular creed and complied with the popular form. The absolute religion of Christ had passed away from the churches; the sectarianism of the priesthood had usurped its place. Goodness was cheated of its due. In the name of Christ was it taught that a good man might be damned; he had kept the law of God as reason and conscience make it known; he had been faithful to God and true and loving to man; he had believed all things that to him were credible, and done prayerfully the duty of a man. "What of that?" said the priest, "he has not believed nor worshipped with the rest of men. Hell waiteth for such." Would to God I could say that these things only were, that they are not. It has for many a hundred years been a heresy in the Christian churches to believe that a man goes to heaven on account of his goodness, his righteousness, or is acceptable to God because he walks manfully by the light God gives him! Has been, did I say? Far worse, it is so now! It is a heresy to believe it now in all popular and recognized churches of Christendom! A creed and a rite are of course but external — only the gold of the altar — not the altar sanctifying the gold. Once they were symbols, perhaps, and signs of all good things to some pious man. They helped him to commune with God. They aided

him to grow. Losing their first estate, to many they become not stimulants of goodness, but substitutes for it. The man rests at the symbol and learns no more!

It was so in Judea when Christ came into the world. No nation of old time surpassed the Jews in their concern for external rites of devotion. No modern nation has equalled them in this. But they were not a good and moral nation; they were not then, and are not now. They were always hated — not without some reason. Let us do them justice for their marvelous merits, but not be blind to their faults. Christ found that in the popular faith goodness and religion were quite different things. Men thought that God was to be served by rites and beliefs. So the priests had taught, making religion consist in what was useless to God and man — a wretched science with the few, a paltry ceremony with the mass. Not so did the prophets teach, for priests and prophets are never agreed. Christ fell back on goodness. He demanded this, he set forth its greatness, its power, in his words and in his life. He encumbered no man with creeds, nor rites. He said, "He that doeth the will of my Father shall know of the doctrine." He summed up the essentials of religion in a few things, a right heart, and a right life, in piety and goodness. He knew they would extend, and that swiftly, to many things. Moses and the law might go their way; they had authority to bind no man. His words were their own evidence and proof; moral truth is its own witness. He had authority. Whence came it? From the scribes and the priests? They hated him. From tradition, Moses, the Old Testament? Quite as little. He puts them behind him. He had authority because he conformed to God's law, in his mind and in his

heart, and in his life. So God spoke through him; inspiration came, and though his friends forsook him, and church and state rose in tumult, clamorous for his overthrow; though the world turned against him, and he stood alone, he was not alone — better than friends, and church, and state, and, world, better than twelve legions of angels, the Father was with him, and he fell not!

Even publicans and harlots welcomed him. They did not love sin. They had been deluded into its service; they found it a hard master. Joyfully they deserted that hopeless Armada to sail the seas with God, soon as one came who put the heart, conscience, reason, on religion's side, speaking with an authority they felt before they saw, showing that religion was real and dear. Humble men saw the mystery of godliness, they felt the power of goodness which streamed forth from their brother's heart of fire. They started to found a church on goodness, on absolute religion, little knowing what they did. Alas! it was a poor church which men founded in that great name, though the best the world ever saw; it was little compared with the ideas of Jesus, little and poor compared with the excellence of goodness and the power of real religion.

Some day there will be churches built in which it shall be taught that the only outward service God asks is goodness, and truth the only creed; that a divine life — piety in the heart, morality in the hand — is the only real worship. Men will use symbols or not, as they like; perhaps will still cling to such as have helped us hitherto; perhaps leave them all behind, and have communion with man in work, and word, and joyful sympathy, with God through the elements of earth, and air, and water, and the sky; or in a serener hour,

without these elements, come nearer yet to him. But in that day will men forget Jesus — the son of Joseph, the carpenter, whom the priests slew, as a madman and an infidel, but whom the world has worshipped as a God? Will his thought, his sentiments, his influence pass away? no, oh! no. What rests on the ideas of God lasts with those ideas. Power shall vanish; glory shall pass away; England and America may become as Nineveh and Babylon. Yes, the incessant hand of time may smooth down the ruggedness of the Alleghany and the Andes, but so long as man is man must these truths of Jesus live; religion be the love of man the love of God. Men will not name Jesus, God; they may not call him master, but the world's teacher. They will love him as their great brother, who taught the truth, and lived the life of heaven here; who broke the fetters of the oppressed, and healed the bruises of the sick, and blessed the souls of all. Then will goodness appear more transcendant, and he will be deemed the best Christian who is most like Christ; most excelling in truth, piety, and goodness. They will not be the preachers who bind, but they who loose mankind; who are full of truth, who live great noble lives, and walk with goodness and with God. Worship will be fresh and natural as the rising sun — beautiful like that, and full of promise too. Truth for the creed, goodness for the form, love for the baptism — shall we wait for that, with folded arms? No, brothers, no. Let us live as if it were so now. Earth shall be blessed and heaven ours.

## IX

## THE CHRISTIAN USE OF SUNDAY

**The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. — Mark ii, 27.**

From past ages we have received many valuable institutions, that have grown out of the transient wants or the permanent nature of man. Amongst these are two which have done a great service in promoting the civilization of mankind, which still continue amongst us. I speak now of the institution of Sunday, and that of preaching. By the one a seventh part of the time is separated from the common pursuits of life, in order that it may be devoted to bodily relaxation, and to the culture of the spiritual powers of man; by the other, a large body of men, in most countries the best educated class, are devoted to the cultivation of these spiritual powers. Such at least is the theory of those two institutions, be their effect in practice what it may. This morning, let us look at one of them, and so I invite your attention to some thoughts relative to the Sunday, to the most Christian and profitable use of that day.

There is a stricter party of Christians amongst us, who speak out their opinions concerning the Sunday; this comprises what are commonly called the more "evangelical" sects. There is a party less strict in many particulars, comprising what are commonly called the more "liberal" sects. They have hitherto been comparatively silent on this theme. Their opinions about the Sunday have not usually been so plainly

spoken out, but have been made apparent by their actions, by occasional and passing words, rather than by full, distinct, and emphatic declarations. The stricter party, of late years, have been growing a little more strict; the party less strict likewise advance in the opposite direction. Recently, a call has been published by a few men for a convention to consult and take some steps towards the less rigid course, for the purpose, as I understand it, of making the Sunday even more valuable than it is now.[1] I take it for granted that both parties desire to make the best possible use of the Sunday — the use most conducive to the highest interests of mankind; that they desire this equally. There are good men on both sides, the more and the less strict; pious men, in the best sense of that word, may be found on both sides. There is no need of imputing bad motives to either party in order to explain the difference between the two.

Such is the aspect of the two parties in the field, looking opposite ways, but at one another. It seems likely that there will be a quarrel, and, as is usual in such cases, hard words on each side, hard thoughts and unkind feelings on both sides. Before the quarrel begins, and our eyes are blinded by the dust of controversy; before our blood is fired, and we become wholly incapable of judgment — let us look coolly at the matter, and ask, do we need any change in respect to the observance of the Sunday? Are the present opinions respecting the origin, nature, and original design of that institution just and true? Is the present mode of observing it the most profitable that can be devised? The inquiry is one of great importance.

To answer these questions, it is necessary to go back a little into the history of the Hebrew Sabbath and

the Christian Sunday. However, it is not needful to go much into detail, or consume this precious hour in a learned discussion on antiquarian matters which concern none but scholars.

With the Hebrews the actual observance of Saturday — the Sabbath — as a day of rest, seems to be of pretty late origin. The first mention of it in authentic Hebrew history, as actually observed, occurs about two hundred years after Samuel, and about six hundred after Moses — a little less than nine hundred before Christ. The passage is found in 2 Kings iv. 23; a child had died, as the narrative relates — the mother wished to send for Elisha, "the man of God." Her husband objects, saying, "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon nor Sabbath." This connection with the new moon is significant. In the earlier historical books of Joshua, Judges, the two books of Samuel, and the first of Kings, there is no mention of the Sabbath, not the least allusion to it.

This seems to have been the origin of its observance — the worship of one God, with the distinctive name Jehovah, gradually got established in the Hebrew nation; for this they seem largely indebted to Moses. Gradually this worship of Jehovah became connected with a body of priests, who were regularly organized at length, and claimed descent from Levi — some of them from Aaron, his celebrated descendant, the elder brother of Moses. The rise of the Levitical priesthood is remarkable, and easily traced in the Old Testament. Some books are entirely destitute of a Levitical spirit, such as Genesis and Judges; others are filled with it, as Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and the books of Chronicles. With the priesthood it seems there came the observance of certain days for religious or

festal purposes — New Moon days, Full Moon days, and the like. These seem to have been derived from the nations about them, with whom the moon — deified as Astarte, the Queen and Mother of Heaven, and under other names — was long an object of worship. The observance of those days points back to the period when fetishism, the worship of nature, was the prominent form of religion. With the other days of religious observance came the seventh day, called the Sabbath. No one knows its true historical origin. The statement respecting its origin in the fourth commandment, and elsewhere in the Old Testament, can hardly be accepted as literally true by any one in this century. No scientific man, in the present stage of philosophic inquiry, will believe that God created the universe in six days, and then rested on the seventh. Did other nations observe this day before the Hebrews; was it also connected with some fetishistic form of worship; what was the historical event which led to the selection of that day in special? This it is easy to ask, but perhaps not possible to answer. These are curious questions; they are of little practical importance to us at this moment.

After the Hebrew institutions of religion got fixed — the worship of Jehovah, the Levitical priesthood, and the peculiar forms of sacrifice — it became common to refer their origin back to the time of Moses, who lived fourteen or fifteen hundred years before Christ. Since few memorials from his age have come down to us, it is plain we can know little of him. But from the impression which his character left on his nation and through them on the whole world, from the myths so early connected with his name, it seems pretty clear that he was one of the greatest and most extraordinary

men that ever lived. Mankind seldom tell great things of little men. It is difficult to say what share he had in making the laws of the Hebrew nation which are commonly referred to him, and as it is popularly taught, revealed to him directly by Jehovah. Perhaps we are not safe in referring to him even the whole of the ten commandments; surely not in any one of their present forms.* Was the Sabbath observed as a day of rest before Moses? Was its observance enforced by him? Was it even known to him? These questions are not easily answered. This is only certain: from the time of Moses to that of Jehoram, a period of about six hundred years, there is no historical mention of its observance, not the least allusion to it. Yet we have documents which treat of that period — the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and the Kings — some of them historical documents, which go into the minute detail of the national peculiarities, and were evidently written with a good deal of concern for strict integrity and truth; they refer to the national rite of circumcision. Now, if the Sabbath had been observed during that period, it is difficult to believe it would have received no passing notice in those historical books. But not only is there no mention of it therein, none even in the times of David and Solomon, who favored the priesthood so strongly; but in the book of Chronicles, the most Levitical book in the Bible, at a date more than two hundred years later than the time of Jehoram, it is distinctly declared that the Sabbath had not been kept for nearly five hundred years.† But

* These celebrated commandments have come down to us in three distinct forms; namely, in Exodus xx., in Exodus xxxiv., and in Deut. v. The differences between these several codes are quite remarkable and significant.

† 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.

even if this statement is true, which is scarcely probable, it is plain from the frequent mention of the Sabbath in the writings of the latter part of that period — Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others — that the institution was one well known and highly regarded by religious men. After the return from the Babylonian exile, it seems to have been kept with considerable rigor; this we learn from the book of Nehemiah.

The Hebrew law, as it is contained in the Pentateuch, is a singular mixture of conflicting statutes, evidently belonging to different ages, many of them wholly unsuitable to the condition of the people when the laws are alleged to have been given. However, they are all referred back to the time of Moses in the Pentateuch itself, and by the popular theology at the present day. In the law the command is given to keep the seventh day as a day of rest, and that command is referred distinctly to Jehovah himself. The reason is given for choosing that day —"for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed;" the Sabbath, therefore, was to be kept in commemoration of the fact that after Jehovah had spent the week in creating the world, "he rested and was refreshed." It was to be a day of rest for master and slave, for man and beast. A special sacrifice was offered on that day, in addition to the usual ceremonies, but no provision was made for the religious instruction of the people. The Sabbath was what its Hebrew name implies, a rest from all labor. The law, in general terms, forbade all work; but, not content with that, it descends to minute details, specifically prohibiting by statute the gathering or preparation of food on the Sabbath, even of food to be consumed on that day itself; the lighting

of a fire, or the removal from one's place; and, by a decision where the statute did not apply, forbade the gathering of sticks of wood. The punishment for violating the Sabbath in general, or in any one of these particulars, was death: "Whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death." However, amusement was not prohibited, nor eating and drinking, only work. The command, "Let no man go out of his place on the seventh day," at a later period was liberally interpreted and a man was allowed to go two thousand cubits, a Sabbath-day's journey.

Long after the time of Moses, some of the Hebrews returned from exile amongst a more civilized and refined people. It seems probable that only the stricter portion returned and established themselves in the land of their fathers. Nehemiah, their leader, enforced the observance of the Sabbath with a strictness and rigor of which earlier times afford no evidence. But the nation was not content with making it a day of idleness. They established synagogues, where the people freely assembled on the Sabbath and other public days, for religious instruction, and thus founded an excellent institution which has shown itself fruitful of good results. So far as I know, that is the earliest instance on record of provision being made for the regular religious instruction of the whole people. Experience has shown its value, and now all the most highly civilized nations of the earth have established similar institutions. However, in the synagogues the business of religious instruction was not at all in the hands of the priests, but in those of the people, acting in their primary character without regard to Levitical establishments. A priest, as such, is never an instructor of the people; he is to go through his ritual, not beyond it.

It is easy to learn from the New Testament what were the current opinions about the Sabbath in the time of Christ. It was unlawful to gather a head of wheat on the Sabbath, as a man walked through the fields; it was unlawful to cure a sick man, though that cure could be effected by a touch or a word; unlawful for a man to walk home and carry the light cushion on which he had lain. What was unlawful was reckoned wicked also; for what is a crime in the eyes of the priest he commonly pretends is likewise a sin before the eyes of God. Yet it was not unlawful to eat, drink, and be merry on the Sabbath; nor to lift a sheep out of the ditch; nor to quarrel with a man who came to deliver mankind from their worst enemies. It was lawful to perform the rite of circumcision on the Sabbath, but unlawful to cure a man of any sickness. Jesus once placed these two, the allowing of that ritual mutilation and the prohibition of the humane act of curing the sick on the Sabbath, in ridiculous contrast. In the fourth Gospel he goes further, and actually denies the alleged ground for the original institution of the Sabbath; he denies that God had ever ceased from his work, or rested: "My Father worketh hitherto." * However, in effecting these cures he committed a capital offence; the Pharisees so regarded it, and took measures to insure his punishment. It does not appear that they were illegal measures. It is probable they took regular and legal means to bring him to condign punishment as a Sabbath-breaker. He escaped by flight.

Such was the Sabbath with the Hebrews, such the recorded opinion of Jesus concerning it. There were also other days in which labor was forbidden, but with

* John v. 1 — 18, and vii. 19 — 24.

them we have nothing to do at present. Jesus taught piety and goodness without the Hebrew limitations; of course, then, the new wine of Christianity could not be put into the old bottle of the Jews. Their fast days and Sabbath days, their rites and forms, were not for him.

Now, not long after the death of Christ his followers became gradually divided into two parties. First, there were the Jewish Christians; that was the oldest portion, the old school of Christians. They are mentioned in ecclesiastical history as the Ebionites, Nazarines, and under yet other names. Peter and James were the great men in that division of the early Christians. Matthew, and the author of the Gospel according to the Hebrews, were their evangelists. The church at Jerusalem was their stronghold. They kept the whole Hebrew law; all its burdensome ritual, its circumcision and its sacrifices, its new-moon days and its full-moon days, Sabbath, fasts, and feasts; the first fifteen bishops of the church at Jerusalem were circumcised Jews. It seems to me they misunderstood Jesus fatally, counting him nothing but the Messiah of the Old Testament, and Christianity, therefore, nothing but Judaism brightened up and restored to its original purity.

I have often mentioned how strongly Matthew, taking him for the author of the first Gospel, favors this way of thinking. He represents Jesus as commanding his disciples to observe all the Mosaic law, as the Pharisees interpreted that law,* though such a command is utterly inconsistent with the general spirit of Christ's teachings, and even with his plain declaration, as pre-

* Matt. xxiii. 1—3.

served in other parts of the same Gospel. It is worthy of note that this command is peculiar to Matthew. But there is another instance of the same Jewish tendency, though not so obvious at first sight. Matthew represents Jesus as saying "the Son of man," that is, the Messiah, "is Lord even of the Sabbath day." Accordingly, he is competent to expound the law correctly, and determine what is lawful to do on that day. In Matthew, therefore, Jesus, in his character of Messiah, is represented as giving a judicial opinion, and ruling that it "is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." Now, Mark and Luke represent it a little different. In Mark, Jesus himself declares that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Matthew entirely omits that remarkable saying. According to Mark, Jesus declares in general terms that man is of more consequence than the observance of the Sabbath, while Matthew only considers that the Messiah is "Lord of the Sabbath day." The cause of this diversity is quite plain. Matthew was a Jewish Christian, and thought Christianity was nothing but restored Judaism.

The other party may be called liberal Christians, though they must not be confounded with the party which now bears that name. They were the new school of early Christians. They rejected the Hebrew law, so far as it did not rest on human nature, and considered that Christianity was a new thing; Christ not a mere Jew, but a universal man, who had thrown down the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles. All the old, artificial distinctions, therefore, were done away with at once. Paul was the head of the liberal party among the primitive Christians.

He was considered a heretic; and though he was more efficient than any of the other early preachers of Christianity, yet the author of the Apocalypse thought him not worthy of a place in the foundation of the new Jerusalem, which rests on the twelve apostles.* The fourth Gospel, with peculiarities of its own, is written wholly in the interest of this party; James is not mentioned in it at all, and Peter plays but quite a subordinate part, and is thrown into the shade by John. The disciples are spoken of as often misunderstanding their great Teacher. These peculiarities cannot be considered as accidental; they are monuments of the controversy then going on between the two parties. Paul stood in direct opposition to the Jewish Christians. This is plain from the Epistle to the Galatians, in which the heads of the rival sects appear very unlike the description given of them in the book of Acts. The observance of Jewish sacred days was one of the subjects of controversy. Let us look only at the matter of the Sabbath as it came in question between the two parties. Paul exalts Christ far above the Messianic predictions of the Old Testament, calling him an image of the invisible God, and declaring that all the fulness of divinity dwells in him, and adds, that he had annulled the old Hebrew law. "Therefore," says Paul, "let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath." † Here he distinctly states the issue between the two Christian sects. Elsewhere he speaks of the Jewish party as men that "would pervert the gospel of Christ" by teaching that a man was "justified by the works of the law," that is, by a minute observance of the He-

* Rev. xxi. 14. † Col. ii. 16.

brew ritual. Paul rejects the authority of the Old Testament. The law of Moses was but a schoolmaster's servant to bring us to Christ; man had come to Christ, and needed that servant no longer; the law was a taskmaster and guardian set over man in his minority, now he had come of age, and was free; the law was a shadow of good things, and they had come; it was a law of sin and death, which no man could bear, and now the law of the spirit of life, as revealed by Jesus Christ, had made men free from the law of sin and death. Such was the work of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Thus sweeping off the authority of the old law in general, he proceeds to particulars: he rejects circumcision, and the offering of sacrifices; rejects the distinction of nations as Jew and Gentile; the distinction of meats as clean and unclean, and all distinction of days as holy and not holy. If one man thought one day holier than another day, if another man thought all days equally holy, he would have each man true to his conviction, but not seek to impose that conviction on his brothers. Such was Paul's opinion of "the law of Moses," such of the Sabbath; the Christians were not "subject to ordinances."

Let us come now to the common practice of the early Christians. The apostles went about and preached Christianity, as they severally understood it. They spoke as they found opportunity; on the Sabbath to the Jews in the synagogues, and on the other days as they found time and hearers. It does not appear from the New Testament that they limited themselves to any particular day; they were missionaries, some of them remained but a little while in a place, making

* Gal. i. 5.

the most of their time. It seems that the early Christians, who lived in large towns, met every day for religious purposes. But as that would be found inconvenient, one day came to be regarded as the regular time of their meetings. The Jewish Christians observed the Sabbath with pharisaic rigor, while the liberal Christians neglected it. But both parties of Christians observed, at length, the first day of the week as a peculiar day. No one knows when this observance of the Sunday began; it is difficult to find proof in the New Testament that the apostles regarded it as a peculiar day; it seems plain that Paul did not. But it is certain that in the second century after Jesus the Christians in general did so regard it, and perhaps all of them.

Why was the Sunday chosen as the regular day for religious meeting? It was regarded as the day on which Jesus rose from the dead; and, following the mythical account in Genesis, it was the day on which God began the creation, and actually created the light. Here there were two reasons for the selection of that day; both are frequently mentioned by the early Christian writers. Sunday, therefore, was to them a symbol of the new creation, and of the light that had come into the world. The liberal Christians, in separating from the Jewish Sabbath, would naturally exalt the new religious day. Athanasius, I think, is the first who ascribes a divine origin to the institution of Sunday. He says "the Lord changed this day from the Sabbath to the Sunday;" but Athanasius lived three centuries after Christ, and seems to have known little about the matter.

The officers and the order of services in the churches on the Sunday seem derived from the usages of the

Jewish synagogues. The Sunday was thus observed: the people came together in the morning; the exercises consisted of readings from the Old Testament and such writings of the Christians as the assembly saw fit to have read to them. In respect to these writings there was a wide difference in the different churches, some accepting more and others less. The overseer or bishop made an address, perhaps an exposition of the passage of Scripture. Prayers were said and hymns chanted; the Lord's supper was celebrated. The form no doubt differed, and widely, too, in different places. It was not the form of servitude, but the spirit of freedom, they observed. But all these things were done, likewise, on other days; the Lord's supper could be celebrated on any day, and is on every day by the Catholic church, even now; for the Catholics have been true to the early practices in more points than the Protestants are willing to admit. In some places it is certain there was a "communion" every day. Sunday was regarded holy by the early Christians, just as certain festivals are regarded holy by the Catholics, the Episcopalians and the Lutherans at this day; as the New Englanders regard Thanksgiving day as holy. Other days, likewise, were regarded as holy; were used in the same manner as the Sunday. Such days were observed in honor of particular events in the life of Jesus, or in honor of saints and martyrs, or they were days consecrated by older festivals belonging to the more ancient forms of religion. In the Catholic church such days are still numerous. It is only the Puritans who have completely rejected them; and they have been obliged to substitute new ones in their place. However, there was one peculiarity of the Sunday which distinguished

it from most or all other days. It was a day of religious rejoicing. On other days the Christians knelt in prayer; on the Sunday they stood up on joyful feet, for light had come into the world. Sunday was a day of gladness and rejoicing. The early Christians had many fasts; they were commonly held on Wednesdays and Fridays, often on Saturday also, the more completely to get rid of the Jewish superstition which consecrated that day; but on Sunday there must be no fast. He would be a heretic who should fast on Sunday. It is strictly forbidden in the "canons of the apostles;" a clergyman must be degraded and a layman excommunicated for the offence. Says St. Ignatius, in the second century, if the epistle be genuine, "Every lover of Christ feasts on the Lord's day." "We deem it wicked," says Tertullian in the third century, "to fast on the Sunday, or to pray on our knees." "Oh," says St. Jerome, "that we could fast on the Sunday, as Paul did and they that were with him." St. Ambrose says the "Manichees were damned for fasting on the Lord's day." At this day the Catholic church allows no fasting on Sunday, save the Sunday before the crucifixion; even Lent ceases on that day.

It does not appear that labor ceased on Sunday in the earliest age of Christianity. But when Sunday became the regular and most important day for holding religious meetings, less labor must of course be performed on that day. At length it became common in some places to abstain from ordinary work on the Sunday. It is not easy to say how early this was brought about. But after Christianity had become "respectable," and found its way to the ranks of the wealthy, cultivated, and powerful, laws got enacted

in its favor. Now the Romans, like all other ancient nations, had certain festal days in which it was not thought proper to labor unless work was pressing. It was disreputable to continue common labor on such days without an urgent reason; they were pretty numerous in the Roman calendar. Courts did not sit on those days; no public business was transacted. They were observed as Christmas and the more important saints' days in Catholic countries; as Thanksgiving day and the Fourth of July with us. In the year three hundred and twenty-one Constantine, the first Christian emperor of Rome, placed Sunday among their ferial days. This was perhaps the first legislative action concerning the day. The statute forbids labor in towns, but expressly excludes all prohibition of field-labor in the country.* About three hundred and sixty-six or seven the Council of Laodicea decreed that Christians "ought not to Judaize and be idle on the Sabbath, but to work on that day; especially observing the Lord's day, and if it is possible, as Christians, resting from labor." Afterwards the Emperor Theodosius forbade certain public games on Sunday, Christmas, Ephiphany, and the whole time from Easter to Pentecost. Justinian likewise forbade theatrical exhibitions, races in the circus, and the fights of wild beasts on Sunday, under severe penalties. This was done in order that the religious services of the Christians might not be disturbed. By his laws the Sunday continued to be a day in which public business was not to be transacted. But the Christmas days, the fifteen days of Easter, and numerous other days previously observed by Christians or pagans, were put in the same class by the law. All this it

* Justinian, *Cod.* Lib. iii. Tit. xii, 1, 3.

seems was done from no superstitious notions respecting those days, but for the sake of public utility and convenience. However, the rigor of the Jewish Sabbatical laws was by no means followed. Labors of love, opera caritatis, were considered as suitable business for those days. The very statute of Theodosius recommended the emancipation of slaves on Sunday. All impediments to their liberation were removed on that day, and though judicial proceedings in all other matters were forbidden on Sunday, an exception was expressly made in favor of emancipating slaves. This statute was preserved in the code of Justinian.* All these laws go to show that there were similar customs previously established among the Christians without the aid of legislation.

About the middle of the sixth century the Council of Orleans forbade labor in the fields, though it did not forbid traveling with cattle and oxen, the preparation of food, or any work necessary to the cleanliness of the house or the person — declaring that rigors of that sort belong more to a Jewish than to a Christian observance of the day. That, I think, is the earliest ecclesiastical decree which has come down to us forbidding field-labor in the country; a decree unknown till five hundred and thirty-eight years after Christ. But before that, in the year three hundred and thirteen, the Council of Elvira in Spain decreed that if any one in a city absented himself three Sundays consecutively from the church, he should be suspended from communion for a short time. Such a regulation, however, was founded purely on considerations of public utility. Many church establishments have thought it necessary to protect themselves from desertion by similar penal laws.

* *Cod.*, Lib. iii. Tit. xii. 1, 2. See also, 1, 3 and 11.

In Catholic countries, at the present day, the morning of Sunday is appropriated to public worship, the people flocking to church. But the afternoon and evening are devoted to society, to amusement of various kinds. Nothing appears sombre, but everything has a festive air; even the theatres are open. Sunday is like Christmas or a Thanksgiving day in Boston, only the festive demonstrations are more public. It is so in the Protestant countries on the continent of Europe. Work is suspended, public and private, except what is necessary for the observance of the day; public lectures are suspended; public libraries closed; but galleries of paintings and statues are thrown open and crowded; the public walks are thronged. In Southern Germany, and, doubtless, elsewhere, young men and women have I seen in summer, of a Sunday afternoon, dancing on the green, the clergyman, Protestant or Catholic, looking on and enjoying the cheerfulness of the young people. Americans think their mode of keeping Sunday is unholy; they, that ours is Jewish and pharisaical. In Paris, sometimes, courses of scientific lectures are delivered after the hours of religious services, to men who are busy during the week with other cares, and who gladly take the hours of their only leisure day to gain a little intellectual instruction.

When England was a Catholic country, Catholic notions of Sunday of course prevailed. Labor was suspended; there was service in the churches, and afterwards there were sports for the people, but they were attended with quarreling, noise, uproar, and continual drunkenness. It was so after the Reformation. In the time of Elizabeth the laws forbade labor except in time of harvest, when it was thought right to work,

if need were, and "save the thing that God hath sent." Some of the Protestants wished to reform those disorders, and convert the Sunday to a higher use. The government, and sometimes the superior clergy, for a long time interfered to prevent the reform, often to protect the abuse. The "Book of Sports," appointed to be read in churches, is well known to us from the just indignation with which it filled our fathers.

Now, it is plain, that in England before the Reformation, the Sunday was not appropriated to its highest use; not to the highest interests of mankind; no, not to the highest concerns which the people at that time were capable of appreciating. The attempts made then and subsequently, by government, to enforce the observance of the day for purposes not the highest led to a fearful reaction; that to other and counter reactions. The ill consequences of those movements have not yet ceased on either side of the ocean.

The Puritans represented the spirit of reaction against ecclesiastical and other abuses of their time, and the age before them. Let me do these men no injustice. I honor the heroic virtues of our fathers not less because I see their faults, see the cause of their faults, and the occasion which demanded such masculine and terrible virtues as the Puritans unquestionably possessed. I speak only of their doctrine of the Sunday. They were driven from one extreme to the other, for oppression makes wise men mad. They took mainly the notions of the Sabbath which belong to the later portions of the Old Testament; they interpreted them with the most pharisaical rigor, and then applied them to the Sunday. Did they find no

warrant for that rigor in the New Testament? they found enough in the Old; enough in their own character, and their consequent notions of God. They thus introduced a set of ideas respecting the Sunday, which the Christian church had never known before, and rigidly enforced an observance thereof utterly foreign both to the letter and spirit of the New Testament. They made Sunday a terrible day, a day of fear and of fasting, and of trembling under the terrors of the Lord. They even called it by the Hebrew name — the Sabbath. The Catholics had said it was not safe to trust the scriptures in the hands of the people, for an inspired word needed an expositor also inspired. The abuse which the Puritans made of the Bible by their notions of the Sunday seemed a fulfilment of the Catholic prophecy. But the Catholics did not see what is plain to all men now — that this very abuse of Sunday and scripture was only the reaction against other abuses, ancient, venerated, and enforced by the Catholic church itself.

Every sect has some institution which is the symbol of its religious consciousness, though not devised for that purpose. With the early Christians, it was their love-feasts and communion; with the Catholics, it is their gorgeous ritual with its ancient date and divine pretensions — a ritual so imposing to many; with the Quakers, who scorn all that is symbolic, the symbol equally appears in the plain dress and the plain speech, the broad brim, and *thee* and *thou*. With the Puritans, this symbol was the Sabbath, not the Sunday. Their Sabbath was like themselves, austere, inflexible as their "divine decrees;" not human and of man, but Hebrew and of the Jews, stern, cold and sad.

The Puritans were possessed with the sentiment of

fear before God; they had ideas analogous to that sentiment, and wrought out actions akin to those ideas. They brought to America their ideas and sentiments. Behold the effect of their actions. Let us walk reverently backward, with averted eyes, to cover up their folly, their shame, and their sin, as they could not walk to conceal the folly of their progenitors. The Puritans are the fathers of New England and her descendant states; the fathers of the American idea; of most things in America that are good; surely, of most that is best. They seem made on purpose for their work of conquering a wilderness and founding a state. It is not with gentle hands, not with the dalliance of effeminate fingers, that such a task is done. The work required energy the most masculine, in heart, head, and hands. None but the Puritans could have done such a work. They could fast as no men; none could work like them; none preach; none pray; none could fight as they fought. They have left a most precious inheritance to men who have the same greatness of soul, but have fallen on happier times. Yet this inheritance is fatal to mere imitators, who will go on planting of vineyards where the first planter fell intoxicated with the fruit of his own toil. This inheritance is dangerous to men who will be no wiser than their ancestors. Let us honor the good deeds of our fathers; and not eat, but reverently bury their honored bones.

The Puritans represented the natural reaction of mankind against old institutions that were absurd or tyrannical. The Catholic church had multiplied feast days to an extreme, and taken unnecessary pains to promote fun and frolic. The Puritans would have none of the saints' days in their calendar; thought

sport was wicked; cut down Maypoles, and punished a man who kept Christmas after the old fashion. The Catholic church had neglected her golden opportunities for giving the people moral and religious instruction; had quite too much neglected public prayer and preaching, but relied mainly on sensuous instruments — architecture, painting, music. In revenge, the Puritan had a meeting-house as plain as boards could make it; tore the pictures to pieces; thought an organ "was not of God," and had sermons long and numerous, and prayers full of earnestness, zeal, piety, and faith, in short, possessed of all desirable things except an end. Did the Catholics forbid the people the Bible, emphatically the book of the people — the Puritan would read no other book; called his children Hebrew names, and reënacted "the laws of God" in the Old Testament, "until we can make better." Did Henry and Elizabeth underrate the people and overvalue the monarchy, nature had her vengeance for that abuse, and the Puritan taught the world that kings, also, had a joint in their necks.

The Puritans went to the extreme in many things: in their contempt for amusements, for what was graceful in man or beautiful in woman; in their scorn of art, of elegant literature, even of music; in their general condemnation of the past, from which they would preserve little excepting what was Hebrew, which, of course, they overhonored as much as they undervalued all the rest. In their notions respecting the Sunday they went to the same extreme. The general reason is obvious. They wished to avoid old abuses, and thought they were not out of the water till they were in the fire. But there was a special reason, also — the English are the most empirical of

all nations. They love a fact more than an idea, and often cling to an historical precedent rather than obey a great truth which transcends all precedents. The national tendency to external things, perhaps, helped lead them to these peculiar notions of the Sabbath. The precedent they found in "the chosen people," and established, as they thought, by God himself.

The ideas of the Puritans respecting the Sunday are still cherished in the popular theology of New England. There is one party in our churches possessed of many excellencies, which has always had the merit of speaking out fully what it thinks and feels. At this day that party still represents the Puritanic opinions about the Sunday, though a little modified. They teach that God created the world in six days, and rested the seventh; that he commanded mankind, also, to rest on that day; commanded a man to be stoned to death for picking up sticks of a Saturday; that by divine authority the first day of the week was substituted for the seventh, and therefore that is the religious duty of all men to rest from work on that day, for the Hebrew law of the Sabbath is binding on Christians for ever. It is maintained that abstinence from work on Sunday is as much a religious duty as abstinence from theft or hatred; that the day must be exclusively devoted to religion, in the technical sense of that word, to public or private worship, to religious reading, thought or conversation. To attend church on that day is thought to be a good in itself, though it should lead to no further good, and therefore a duty as imperative as the duty of loving man and God. The preacher may not edify, still the duty of attending to his ministration of the word remains the same;

for the attendance is a good in itself. It is taught that work, that amusement, common conversation, the reading of a book not technically religious is a sin, just as clearly a sin as theft or hatred, though perhaps not so great. Writing a letter, even, is denounced as a sin, though the letter be written for the purpose of arresting the progress of a war, and securing life and freedom to millions of men.

Now it is very plain that such ideas are not consistent with the truth. In the language of the church, they are a heresy. As we learn the facts of the case we must give up such ideas concerning the Sunday. It is like any other day. Christianity knows no classes of days, as holy or profane; all days are the Lord's days, all time holy time.

But then comes the other question, What is the best use to be made of the day; the use most conducive to the highest interests of mankind? Will it be most profitable to "give up the Sunday," to use it as the Catholics do, as the Puritans did, or to adopt some other method? To answer these questions fairly, let us look and see the effects of the present notions about the Sunday, and the stricter mode of observing it here in New England. The experience of two hundred years is worth looking at. Let us look at the good effects first.

The good and evil of any age are commonly bound so closely together that in plucking up the tares there is danger lest the wheat also be uprooted, at least trodden down. In America, especially in New England, everything is intense, with of course a tendency to extravagance, to fanaticism. Look at some of the most obvious signs of that intensity. No conservatism in the world is so bigoted as American con-

servatism; no democracy so intense. Nowhere else can you find such thorough-going defenders of the existing state of things, social, ecclesiastical, civil; such defenders of drunkenness, ignorance, superstition, slavery, and war; nowhere such radical enemies to the existing state of things; such foes of drunkenness, ignorance, superstition, slavery, and war. No "revivals of religion" are like the American; none of old were like these. See how the American soldiers fight; how the American men will work. Puritanism was intense enough in England; in the New World it was yet more so. Our fathers were intense Calvinists; more Calvanistic than Calvin — they became Hopkinsian. They hated the Pope; kings and bishops were their aversion. They feared God. Did they love him — love him as much? They had an intense religious activity, but they had another intensity. It is better that we should say it, rather than men who do not honor them. That intensity of action, when turned towards material things, or as they called them, "carnal things," needed some powerful check. It was found in their bigotry and superstition. In such an age as theirs, when the Reformation broke down all the ordinary restraints of society, and rent asunder the golden ties which bound man to the past; when the Anglican church ended in fire, and the English monarchy in blood; when men full of piety thanked God for the fire and the bloodshed, and felt the wrongs of a thousand years driving them almost to madness — what was there to keep such men within bounds, and restrain them from the wildest license and unbridled anarchy? Nothing but superstition; nothing short of fear of hell. They broke down the monarchy; they trod the church under their feet.

She who had once been counted as the queen and mother of society was now to be regarded only as the apocalyptic woman in scarlet, the mother of abominations, bride of the devil, and queen of hell. The Old Testament wrought on the minds of these men like a charm, to stimulate and to soothe. "One day," said they, "is made holy by God; in it shall no work be done by man or beast or thing inanimate. On that day all must attend church as an act of religion." Here, then, was a bar extending across the stream of worldliness, filling one seventh part of its channel wide and deep, and wonderfully interrupting its whelming tide. I admire the divine skill which compounds the gases in the air; which balances centripetal and centrifugal forces into harmonious proportions — those fair ellipses in the unseen air; but still more marvelous is that same skill, diviner now, which compounds the folly and the wisdom of mankind; balances centripetal and centrifugal forces here, stilling the noise of kings and the tumult of the people, making their wrath to serve him, and the remnant thereof restraining for ever.

On Sunday, master and man, the slave stolen from the wilderness, the servant — a Christian man bought from some Christian conqueror — must cease from their work. Did the covetous, the cruel, the strong, oppress the weak for six days, the Sabbath said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." The servant was free from his master, and the weary was at rest. The plough stood still in the furrow; the sheaf lay neglected in the field; the horse and the ox enjoyed their master's Sabbath of rest, all heedless of the divine decrees, of election or reprobation, yet not the less watched over by that dear Providence which numbered the hairs of the head, and overruled

the falling of a sparrow for the sparrow's good. All must attend church, master and man, rich and poor, oppressor and oppressed. Good things and great things got read out of the Bible, it was the book of the people, the New Testament, written much of it in the interest of all mankind, with special emphasis laid on the rights of the weak and the duties of the strong. Good things got said in sermon and in prayer. The speakers must think, the hearers think, as well as tremble. Begin to think in a circle narrow as a lady's ring or the Assembly's Catechism, you will think out; for thought, like all movement, tends to the right line. Calvinism has always bred thinkers, and when barbarism was the first danger was perhaps the only thing which could do it. Calvinism, too, has always shown itself in favor of popular liberty to a certain degree, and though it stops far short of the mark, yet goes far beyond the Catholic or Episcopalian.

Sunday, thus enforced by superstition, has yet been the education-day of New England; the national school-time for the culture of man's highest powers; therein have the clergy been our educators, and done a vast service which mankind will not soon forget. It was good seed they sowed on this soil of the New World; the harvest is proof of that. They builded wiser than they knew. Their unconscious hands constructed the thought of God. Even their superstition and bigotry did much to preserve church and clergy to us; much also to educate and develop the highest powers of man. But for that superstition we might have seen the same anarchy, the same unbridled license in the seventeenth century which we saw in the eighteenth, as a consequence of a similar revolution, a similar re-

action; only it would have been carried out with the intensity of that most masculine and earnest race of men. How much further English atrocities would have gone than the French did go; how long it would have taken mankind, by their proper motion, to re-ascend from a fall so adverse and so low, I cannot tell. I see what saved them from the plunge.

True, the Sunday was not what it should be, more than the week; preaching was not what it should be, more than practice. But without that Sunday, and without that preaching, New England would have been quite a different land; America another nation altogether; the world by no means so far advanced as now. New England with her descendants has always been the superior portion of America. I flatter no man's prejudice, but speak a plain truth. She is superior in intelligence, in morality — that is too plain for proof. The prime cause of that superiority must be sought in the character of the fathers of New England; but a secondary and most powerful cause is to be found also in those two institutions — Sunday and preaching. Why is it that all great movements, from the American Revolution down to anti-slavery, have begun here? Why is it that education societies, missionary societies, Bible societies, and all the movements for the advance of mankind, begin here? Why, it is no more an accident than the rising of the tide. Find much of the cause in the superior character, and therefore in the superior aims of the forefathers, much also will be found due to this — once in the week they paused from all work; they thought of their God, who had delivered them from the iron house and yoke of bondage; they listened to the words of able men, exhorting them to justice, piety,

and a heavenly walk with God; they trembled at fear of hell, they rejoiced at hope of heaven. The church — no, the "meeting-house"— was the common property of all; the minister the common friend. The slave looked up to him; the chief magistrate dared not look down on him. For more than a hundred years the ablest men of New England went into the pulpit. No talent was thought too great, no learning too rich and profound, no genius too holy and divine, for the work of teaching men their highest duty, and helping to their highest bliss. He was the minister to all. There was not then a church for the rich, and a chapel for the poor; the rich and the poor met together, for one God was the maker of them all — their Father too; they had one gospel, one Redeemer — their Brother not less than their God; they journeyed toward the same heaven, which had but one entrance for great and little; they prayed all the same prayer. The effect of this socialism of religion is seldom noticed; so we walk on moist earth, not thinking that we tread on the thunder-cloud and the lightning. But it is not in human nature for men of intense religious activity to meet in the same church, sing the same psalm, pray the same prayer, partake the same elements of communion, and not be touched with compassion — each for all, and all for each. The same causes which built up religion in New England built up democracy along with it. Is it not easy to see the cause which made the rich men of New England the most benevolent of rich men; gave them their character for generosity and public spirit — yes, for eminent humanity? The acorn is not more obviously the parent of the oak than those two institutions of New England the parent of such masculine virtues as distinguish her sons.

Regarded merely as a day of rest from labor, the Sunday has been of great value to us. Considering the intense character of the nation, our tendency to material things, and our restless love of work, it seems as if a Moses of the nineteenth century, legislating for us, would enact two rest-days in the week rather than one. It is a good thing that a man once a week pauses from his work, arrays himself in clean garments, and is at rest.

Regarded in its other aspects, Sunday has aided the intellectual culture of the people to a degree not often appreciated. To many a man, yes, to most men, it is their only reading day, and they will read "secular" books, spite of the clerical admonition. Many a poor boy in New England, who has toiled all the week, and would gladly have studied all the night, did not obstinate nature forbid, has studied stealthily all Sunday, not Jeremiah and the prophets, but Homer and the mathematics, and risen at length to eminence amongst cultivated men — he has to thank the Sunday for the beginnings of that manly growth.

The moral and religious effect of the day is yet more important. One seventh part of the time was to be devoted to moral and religious culture. The clergy watched diligently over Sunday, as their own day. Work was then the accident; religion was the business. Everything with us becomes earnest; Sunday as earnest as the week. It must not be spent idly. Perhaps no body of clergymen, for two hundred years, on the whole were ever so wakeful and active as the American. They also are earnest and full of intensity, especially in the more serious sects. I think I am not very superstitious; not often inclined to lean on my father's staff rather than walk on my own feet;

not over-much accustomed to take things on trust because they have been trusted to all along: but I must confess that I see a vast amount of good achieved by the aid of these two institutions, the Sunday and preaching, which could not have been done without them. I know I have my prejudices; I love the Sunday; a professional bias may warp me aside, for I am a preacher — the pulpit is my joy and my throne. Judge you how far my profession and my prejudice have led me astray in estimating the value of the Sunday, its preaching, and the good they have achieved for us in New England. I know what superstition, what bigotry, has been connected with both; I know it has kept grim and terrible guard about these institutions. I look upon that superstitution and bigotry as on the old New England guns which were fought with in the Indian wars, the French wars, and the Revolution — things that did service when men knew not how to defend what they valued most with better tools and more Christian. I look on both with the same melancholy veneration, but honor them the more that now they are old, battered, unfit for use, and covered with rust. I would respectfully hang them up, superstitution and the musket, side by side; honorable, but harmless, with their muzzles down, and pray God it might never be my lot to handle such ungodly weapons, though in a cause never so humane and holy.

Let us look a little at the ill effects of these notions of the Sunday and the observance which they led to. It is thought an act of religion to attend church and give a mere bodily presence there. Hence the minister often relies on this circumstance to bring his audience together; preaches sermons on the duty

of going to church, while ingenuous boys blush for his weakness, and ask, "Were it not better to rely on your goodness, your piety, your wisdom; on your superior ability to teach men, even on your eloquence; rather than tell them it is an act of religion to come and hear you, when both they and you are painfully conscious that they are thereby made no wiser, no better, nor more Christian?" This notion is a dangerous one for a clergyman. It flatters his pride and encourages his sloth. It blinds him to his own defects, and leads him to attribute his empty benches to the perverseness of human nature and the carnal heart, which a few snow-flakes can frighten from his church, while a storm will not keep them from a lecture on science or literature. No doubt it is a man's duty to seek all opportunities of becoming wiser and better. So far as church-going helps that work, so far it is a duty. But to count it in itself, irrespective of its consequences, an act of religion, is to commit a dangerous error, which has proved fatal to many a man's growth in goodness and piety. Let us look to the end, not merely at the means.

This notion has also a bad effect on the hearers. It is thought an act of religion to attend church, whether you are edified or not by sermon, by psalm, or prayer; an act of religion, though you could more profitably spend the time in your own closet at home, or with your own thoughts in the fields. Of course, then, he who attends once a day is thought a Christian to a certain degree; if twice, more so; if thrice, why that denotes an additional amount of growth in grace. In this way the day is often spent in a continual round of meetings. Sermon follows sermon; prayer treads upon the footsteps of prayer; psalm

effaces psalm, till morning, afternoon, evening, all are gone. The Sunday is ended and over; the man is tired — but has he been profited and made better thereby? The sermons and the prayers have cancelled one another, been heard and forgot. They were too numerous to remember or produce their effect. So on a summer's lake, as the winds loiter and then pass by, ripple follows ripple, and wave succeeds to wave, yet the next day the wind has ceased and the unstable water bears no trace left there by all the blowings of the former day, but bares its incontinent bosom to the frailest and most fleeting clouds.

Another ill effect follows from regarding attendance at church as an act of religion in itself — it is forgotten that a man cannot teach what he does not know. If you have more manhood than I, more religion; if you are the more humane and the more divine, it is idle for me to try and teach you divinity and humanity; idle in you to make believe you are taught. The less must learn of the greater, not the greater directly of the less. It is too often forgotten by the preacher that his hearers may be capable of teaching him; that he cannot fill them out of an emptiness, but a fulness. Hence it comes to pass that no one, how advanced soever, is allowed to graduate, so to say, from the church. Perhaps it may do a great man, mature in Christianity, good to sit down with his fellows and hear a little man talk who knows nothing of religion; it may increase his sympathy with mankind. It can hardly be an act of religion to such a man so advanced in his goodness and piety; perhaps not the best use he could make of the hour.

The current opinion hinders social tendencies. A man must not meet with his friend and neighbor, or

if he does, he must talk with bated breath, with ghostly countenance, and of a ghostly theme. From this abuse of the Sunday comes much of the cold and unsocial character which strangers charge us with. As things now go, there are many who have no opportunity for social intercourse except the hour of the Sunday. Then it is forbidden them. So they suffer and lose much of the charm of life; become ungenial, unsocial, stiff, and hard, and cold.

This notion hinders men, also, from intellectual culture. They must read no book but one professedly religious. Such works are commonly poor and dull; written mainly by men of little ability, of little breadth of view; not written in the interests of mankind, but only of a sect — the Calvinists or Unitarians. A good man groans when he looks over the immense piles of sectarian books written with good motives, and read with the most devout of intentions, but which produce their best effect when they lead only to sleep. Yet it is commonly taught that it is religion to spend a part of Sunday in reading such works, in listening, or in trying to listen, or in affecting to try and listen, to the most watery sermons, while it is wicked to read some "secular" book, philosophy, history, poem, or tale, which expands the mind and warms the heart. Our poor but wisdom-seeking boy must read his Homer only by stealth. There are many men who have no time for intellectual pursuits, none for reading, except on Sunday. It is cruel to tell them they shall read none but sectarian books or listen only to sectarian words.

But there are other evils yet. These notions and the corresponding practice tend to make religion external, consisting in obedience to form, in compliance

with custom; while religion is and can be only piety and goodness, love to God and love to man. To keep the Sunday idle, to attend church, is not being religious. It is easy to do that; easy to stop there, and then to look at real, manly saints who live in the odor of sanctity, whose sentiment is a prayer, their deeds religion, and their whole life a perpetual communion with God, and say, "Infidel! Unbeliever."

Then, as one day is devoted to religion, it is thought that is enough; that religion has no more business in the world than the world in religion. So division is made of the territory of mortal life, in which partition worldliness has six days, while poor religion has only the Sunday, and content with her own limits, feels no salient wish to absorb or annex the week! It is painful to see this abuse of an institution so noble. No commonness of its occurrence renders it less painful. It is painful to be told that men of the most scrupulous sects on Sunday are in the week the least scrupulous of men.

But even in religious matters it is thought all things which pertain directly to the religious welfare of men are not proper to be discussed on Sunday. One must not preach against intemperance, against slavery, against war, on Sunday. It is not "evangelical;" not "preaching the gospel." Yet it is thought proper to preach on total depravity, on eternal damnation; to show that God will damn for ever the majority of mankind; that the apostle Peter was a Unitarian.[2] The Sunday is not the time, the pulpit not the place, preaching not the instrument, wherewith to oppose the monstrous sins of our day and secure education, temperance, peace, freedom, for mankind. It is not evangelical, not Christian, to do that of a Sunday!

Yet wonderful to say, it is not thought very wicked to hold a political caucus on Sunday for the merest party purposes; not wicked at all to work all day at the navy-yards in fitting out vessels if they are only vessels of war; not at all wicked to toil all Sunday, if it is only in aiming to kill men in regular battle. Theological newspapers can expend their cheap censure on a member of Congress for writing a letter on Sunday, yet have no word of fault to find with the order which sets hundreds to work on Sunday in preparing armaments of war; not a word against the war which sets men to butcher their Christian brothers on the day which Christians celebrate as the anniversary of Christ's triumph over death![8] These things show that we have not yet arrived at the most profitable and Christian mode of using the Sunday; and when I consider these abuses I wonder not that the cry of "Infidel" is met by the unchristian taunt, yet more deserving and biting, "Thou hypocrite!" I wonder not that some men say, "Let us away with the Sunday altogether; and if we have no place for rest, we will have none for hypocrisy."

The efforts honestly made by good and honest men to Judaize the day still more; to revive the sterner features of ancient worship; to put a yoke on us which neither we nor our fathers could bear; to transform the Christian Sunday into the Jewish Sabbath, must lead to a reaction. Abuse on one side will be met by abuse on the other; despotic asceticism by license; Judaism by heathenism. Superstition is the mother of denial. Men will scorn the Sunday; abuse its timely rest. Its hours that may be devoted to man's highest interests will be prostituted to low aims, and worldliness make an unbroken sweep from one end of the

month to the other; and then it will take years of toil before mankind can get back and secure the blessings now placed within an easy reach. I put it to you, men whose heads time has crowned with white or sprinkled with a sober gray, if you would deem it salutary to enforce on your grandchildren the Sabbath austerities which your parents imposed on you? In your youth was the Sunday a welcome day, a genial day, or only wearisome and sour? Was religion, dressed in her Sabbath dress, a welcome guest; was she lovely and to be desired? Your faces answer. Let us profit by your experience.

How can we make the Sunday yet more valuable? If we abandon the superstitious notions respecting its origin and original design, the evils that have hitherto hindered its use will soon perish of themselves. They all grow out of that root. If men are not driven into a reaction by pretensions for the Sunday which facts will not warrant, if unreasonable austerities are are not forced upon them in the name of the law and the name of God, there is no danger in our day that men will abandon an institution which already has done so much service to mankind. Let Sunday and preaching stand on their own merits, and they will encounter no more opposition than the common school and the work-days of the week. Then men will be ready enough to appropriate the Sunday to the highest objects they know and can appreciate. Tell men the Sunday is made for man, and they will use it for its highest use. Tell them man is made for it, and they will war on it as a tyrant. I should be sorry to see the Sunday devoted to common work; sorry to hear the clatter of a mill or the rattle of the wheels of busi-

ness on that day. I look with pain on men engaged needlessly in work on that day; not with the pain of wounded superstition, but a deeper regret. I would not water my garden with perfumes when common water was at hand. We shall always have work enough in America; hand-work, and head-work, for common purposes. There is danger that we shall not have enough of rest, of intellectual cultivation, of refinement, of social intercourse; that our time shall be too much devoted to the lower interests of life, to the means of living and not the end.

I would not consider it an act of religion to attend church; only a good thing to go there when the way of improvement leads through it, when you are made wiser and better by being there. I am pained to see a man spend the whole of a Sunday in going to church — and forgetting himself in getting acquainted with the words of the preachers. I think most intelligent hearers, and most intelligent and Christian preachers, will confess that two sermons are better than three, and one is better than two. One need only look at the afternoon face of a congregation in the city to be satisfied of this. If one half the day were devoted to public worship, the other half might be free for private studies of men at home, for private devotion, for social relaxation, for intercourse with one's own family and friends. Then Sunday afternoon and evening would afford an excellent opportunity for meetings for the promotion of the great humane movements of the day, which some would think not evangelical enough to be treated of in the morning. Would it be inconsistent with the great purposes of the day, inconsistent with Christianity, to have lectures on science, literature, and similar subjects delivered then? I do

not believe the Catholic custom of spending the Sunday afternoon in England, before the Reformation, was a good one. It diverted men from the higher end to the lower. I cannot think that here and now we need amusement so much as society, instruction, refinement, and devotion. Yet it seems to me unwise to restrain the innocent sports of children of a Sunday to the same degree that our fathers did, to make Sunday to them a day of gloom and sadness. Thoughtful parents are now much troubled in this matter; they cannot enforce the old discipline, so disastrous to themselves; they fear to trust their own sense of what is right — so perhaps get the ill of both schemes, and the good of neither. There are in Boston about thirty thousand Catholics, twenty-five thousand of them, probably, too ignorant to read with pleasure or profit any book. At home amusement formed a part of their Sunday service; it was a part of their religion to make a festive use of Sunday afternoon. What shall they do? Is it Christian in us by statute to interdict them from their recreation? With the exception of children and these most ignorant persons, it does not appear that there is any class amongst us who need any part of the Sunday for sport.

I am not one of those who wish "to give up the Sunday;" indeed there are few such men amongst us; I would make it yet more useful and profitable. I would remove from it the superstitution and the bigotry which have so long been connected with it; I would use it freely, as a Christian not enslaved by the letter of Judaism, but made free by an obedience to the law of the spirit of life. I would use the Sunday for religion in the wide sense of that word; use it to promote piety and goodness, for humanity, for science,

for letters, for society. I would not abuse it by impudent license on the one hand nor by slavish superstition on the other. We can easily escape the evils which come of the old abuse; can make the Sunday ten times more valuable than it is even now; can employ it for all the highest interests of mankind, and fear no reaction into libertinism.

The Sunday is made for man, as are all other days; not man for the Sunday. Let us use it, then, not consuming its hours in a Jewish observance; not devote it to the lower necessities of life, but the higher; not squander it in idleness, sloth, frivolity, or sleep; let us use it for the body's rest, for the mind's culture, for head and heart and soul.

Men and women, you have received the Sunday from your fathers, as a day to be devoted to the highest interests of man. It has done great service for them and for you. But it has come down accompanied with superstitution which robs it of half its value. It is easy for you to make the day far more profitable to yourselves than it ever was to your fathers; easy to divest it of all bigotry, to free it from all oldness of the letter; easy to leave it for your children an institution which shall bless them for ages yet to come; or it is easy to bind on their necks unnatural restraints, to impose on their conscience and understanding absurdities which at last they must repel with scorn and contempt. It is in your hands to make the Sunday Jewish or Christian.

# X

## THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS

I. Let us first ascertain the opinion prevalent in the life time of Jesus himself, as the basis of our inquiry. It appears from the New Testament that the contemporaries of Jesus regarded him as the son of Joseph and Mary (Matt. xiii, 55, Luke iv. 22, John vi, 42). His brothers and sisters also are mentioned, (*οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ*), and Jesus is called the first-born son of Mary, (*τὸν πρωτότοκον*), in some manuscripts, and the common editions (Matt. i, 25). In the third Gospel the author calls Joseph and Mary his parents (*οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ*) and Mary herself is represented as calling Joseph his father. In the fourth Gospel Philip speaks of Jesus as the son of Joseph of Nazareth (John i, 45).

The genealogies still preserved in the first and third Gospels, in curious contradiction to his divine origin, proceed in the supposition that Jesus had two human parents, a mortal father as well as a mortal mother. So, on the side of his father, his descent is traced back to Abraham in the one author, and to Adam in the other.

The Ebionites, who were the primitive Christians, it seems always adhered to the opinion that Jesus was a man born and begotten in the common way, selected and anointed, and so becoming the Christ, not by his birth, but his selection and inspiration. It seems highly probable that this was the opinion of the earliest church at Jerusalem.*

* See Justin Martyr, Dial. cum Tryphone, cap. 49 (Opp. ed.

It seems that the celebrated Gospel according to the Hebrews regarded Jesus as a man born after the common way, and made his divinity commence only with the baptism by John; for after the descent of the Holy Spirit it is stated, "There came a voice from heaven and said, 'Thou art my beloved Son, *this day have I begotten thee.*'" Justin found this passage in the Memoirs of the Apostles extant in his time,† and it is still preserved, with many other curious and instructive readings, in the celebrated Cambridge manuscript, the *Codex Bezæ* (Luke iii. 22).

These monuments very plainly refer us to a period when it may reasonably be supposed that the prevalent opinion among the followers of Jesus was, that he was a man born after the common way, of two human parents, and subsequently became the Christ, the Hebrew Messiah. This is the nature and this the office assigned him. Such is the basis on which successive deposits of speculation have been made and continue to be made. It is no part of our present concern to determine what the Christians at first thought of his history, of his miracles, and of his resurrection, for we limit our inquiry to the nature and office of Jesus.

II. In the first and third Gospels, as they now stand in manuscripts and editions, it is taught that Jesus was the son of Mary and a holy spirit (Matt. i. 18, and Luke i. 35, it is in both cases πνεῦμα ἅγιον, not τὸ πνεῦμα

Otto, Tom.II. p. 156), and Eusebius, H. E. Lib. III. 27 (ed. Heinichen, Tom. I. p. 252). See also Schwegler, Nachapostolische Zeital ter (Tübingen, 1846, 2 vols. 8vo.), B. I. p. 90 *et seq.*

See also Schwegler, Nachapostolische Zeiltalter (Tubingen, 1846, 2 vols. 8vo), B. I. p. 90, *et seq.*

† Dial. cum Tryphone, cap. 88 (Tom. II. p. 308). See, too, Epiphanius Hæres, xxx. 13, and Schwegler, *l. c.* B. I. p. 197, *et seq.*

ἅγιον). He was miraculously born, with no human father. He is also the Christ, the Hebrew Messiah, predicted in the Old Testament. He is called the Son of God (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ). He is endowed with miraculous powers, is transfigured, returns to life after his crucifixion, and is to come back yet once more. Such is the highest office, and such is the highest nature assigned him in the first and third Gospels.

There is, however, one curious passage in Matt. xi. 27, and Luke x. 22, in which Jesus is represented as saying, "All things are delivered to me by my Father, and no one knows who is the Son, except the Father, and who is the Father, except the Son, and he to whom the Son is pleased to reveal him." This passage may possibly mean only that Jesus is the complete possessor of his Messianic powers, and he alone knows who is the Messiah, and alone understands the character of God. But to us it seems to have a different meaning, and to stand in plain contradiction to the general notion of Jesus entertained in these two Gospels. It will presently appear to what a different class of speculations this verse seems to belong.

The second Gospel calls Jesus a son of God, (υἱὸς Θεοῦ, not ὁ υἱός, except iii. 11, etc., where uninformed persons speak), but is not quite so definite in its statements as the two other Gospels already referred to; but it does not seem probable that the author designed to set forth a distinct theory of the nature and office of Christ peculiar to himself, only to avoid difficulties by silence. The omission of the miraculous birth of Jesus, however, is characteristic of the third Gospel, which often compromises and steers a middle course between the Hebrew and the Hellenistic Christians. This omission (as well as the neglect to mention the Galileans,

with whom Jesus stands in such entirely opposite relations in the first and third Gospels) was probably a part of the author's plan.

Thus, then, we find that a miraculous birth, with only one human parent, is the deposit of the first and third Gospels, the addition they have made to the earlier Christology.

III. Let us next examine the epistles attributed to Peter, James, and Jude, with the Apocalypse — books which indicate the tendency of the Jewish party among the Christians.

In the so-called Epistle of James, which is rich in dogmatic peculiarities, and a valuable monument in the history of the development of Christianity, there is no peculiar and characteristic Christology which requires mention here.

In the First Epistle of Peter, so called, it is said the spirit of Christ was in the prophets of the Old Testament, who foretold his sufferings and glory (*τὸ πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ*, 1 Peter i. 11); Christ was pre-appointed before the foundation of the world (*προεγνωσμένος*); with his precious blood the Christians are redeemed from their foolish course of life, inherited from their fathers (*ματαίας ἀναστροφῆς πατροπαραδότου*, i. 18, 19), that is, from the Jewish form of religion. He also bore the sins of Christians in his own body on the cross, and died, the just for the unjust, that he might conduct the Christians to God (ii. 24, and iii. 18).

After his death, he went to the departed spirits who had not believed in the time of Noah. He is now gone to heaven, and is on the right hand of God. Angels, and authorities, and powers are subject to him (iii. 22).

The Second Epistle attributed to Peter, and that to Jude, are without any peculiar Christological significance for the present purpose.

In the Apocalypse, Christ is the "first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the world" (i. 5); he is the "beginning of the creation of God" (ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, iii. 14). He has the same functions as in the epistles mentioned above,— he redeems the Christians by his blood.

Here the new matter added to the previous Christology is this: his spirit had previously existed; he was pre-appointed before the foundation of the world, was the beginning of creation, redeems man by his blood, is the first-born of the dead, ruler of the kings of the world, and has preached to the souls of men who lived before the flood.

IV. In the four epistles ascribed to Paul, whose genuineness, we think, has not been questioned — those to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians, we find a Christology unknown to the three Gospels and the other writings we have referred to above. As the Pauline Christology becomes more complicated than its predecessors, it is necessary to consider its elements separately; so we will speak first of the nature, and then of the function of Jesus.

In these Epistles, as in those Gospels, Jesus is the Christ of the Hebrew Scriptures — crucified, and risen from the dead. This is the point of generic agreement between the Christology of these four Epistles and those three Gospels. But in the Epistles there appear these peculiarities: the Christ had a pre-existence before he appeared in the personal form of Jesus; he was with the Israelites in the wilderness, a spiritual rock that followed the people in their wanderings, and from which they all drank the same spiritual drink — meaning, we take it, the same spiritual drink which the Christians drank in Paul's time, contradictory as it may

seem; but the Christ could not change. This pre-existence is taught by the common text in Galatians iii. 17, which says that the covenant of God with Abraham, more than four hundred years before Moses, was made by God, through the mediation of Christ (*ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰς Χριστόν*); but as the best copies omit the reference to Christ, this passage cannot be fairly used at the present time as an authority. However, a single genuine passage, if clear and distinct, is as good as many.

In 2 Cor. viii. 9, it is said that Christ had been rich, but had impoverished himself (*ἐπτώχευσεν*) for mankind. Of course, he could only have been rich in a state of existence before he took the personal form of Jesus.

Thus he was not merely a man and Messiah — having had a pre-existence in the latter capacity, at least — but God is immanent with him in a peculiar sense; for it is said (2 Cor. v. 19), "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." By the text of the common editions he is once called "God over all, blessed for ever" (*ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων Θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*, Rom. ix. 5); but as the word God is of doubtful authority, the text ought not to be pressed into the service of any opinion as if it represented the undisputed sense of Paul. However, in passages beyond dispute, he is called God's power, and God's wisdom (*Θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ Θεοῦ σοφίαν*, 1 Cor. i. 24), and is once called absolutely the Spirit (*τὸ πνεῦμα*, 2 Cor. iii. 17).

His resurrection is distinctly declared, but no allusion is made to his miraculous birth or miraculous deeds.

Such is Paul's opinion of the nature of Christ, but he says more of the office and function of Christ than of his nature. He was the final cause, the scope or object aimed at in the law of Moses (*τέλος νόμου*, Rom. x. 4, and *τέλος τοῦ* [*νόμου*] *καταργουμένου*, 2 Cor. iii. 13).

The Jews did not understand this, and so there is a veil on their understanding while they read the Old Testament, but it will be removed when they are converted to Christianity.

He is the instrument by which God is to judge the world; all are to appear before his tribunal; he is to rule the living and the dead (Rom. ii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 10).

Christ intercedes (ἐντυγχάνει) for men with God (Rom. viii. 34), he is the paschal sacrifice for the Christians (1 Cor. v. 7), men who were not just before and are not just now are to be accounted just before God on account of their faith in Christ, and by means of the ransom he has paid (Rom. v. 22–24; v. 18, *et seq.*, *et al.*). This ransom is paid for all men, and not merely for the Jews; he is the new Adam, who brings life to such as are dead (1 Cor. xv. 21, 22). Once, Paul had been ignorant of this fact, and knew Christ after the flesh, as the Savior of the Jews alone, but now not after the flesh, but the Christ and Savior of all (2 Cor. v. 16).

He is the proximate and efficient cause of all things, as God is the ultimate cause thereof (δι' οὗ [Χριστοῦ] τὰ πάντα, 1 Cor. viii. 6), though elsewhere God is the ultimate, the efficient, and the possessory cause of all things.*

In these four Epistles, following their undisputed test, and neglecting the passages where the text is doubtful, Paul goes no higher in his description of the nature and function of Christ. He is a man, born of

* Ἐξ αὐτοῦ, καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα, Rom. ix. 36. These words seem to denote respectively the *ultimate* cause (or ground) of all things; the *proximate* or *efficient* (instrumental) cause thereof; and the *owner* of all things, whose purpose they were to serve.

a woman; the first-born among many brethren; he had a pre-existence, distinct, and apparently self-conscious. He is the proximate cause of all things. His coming is the fulfilment of the law, which is now repealed, null, and void. He is the Savior of all men, through a sacrifice on his part, and faith on their part.

The peculiar addition which Paul makes to the Christology of his predecessors is this: a more distinct statement of his personal pre-existence and function as minister of the Abrahamic covenant, and as sustainer of the Israelites in the wilderness; a generalization of his function to that of a universal Christ and Savior, and the destruction of the Mosaic law.

V. In some of the other Epistles ascribed to Paul, though with a disputed certainty, we find the personality of Christ goes still higher. Passing over the passages in the Epistle to the Ephesians which are vague in their character or uncertain in their text, we come to the Philippians, and find there more remarkable expressions. Thus it is said that Jesus was in the form of God, though not equal to God, as we understand it (*ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ*, ii. 6, 9–11). He descends from this eminence and receives the form of a servant (*μορφὴν δουλοῦ*), but has since received "the name above every name;" all beings, subterranean, earthly, and super-celestial, are to do homage to him.

In Colossians, Christ is "an image of God, the invisible" (*εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου*), "the first-born of all creatures, for in him (*ἐν αὐτῷ*) were made all things in heaven and upon the earth — the seen and the unseen; all are made by him and for him" (*δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν*), by him, as instrument, and for him, as possessor. "He is before all, and all things continue to subsist by him." "He is the beginning, that in all re-

spects he might be the first, for in him it has pleased [God] that all the fulness [of the Deity] should dwell (i. 15–20.) All the fulness of the Deity resides corporeally in him" (Πάντα πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος σωματικῶς, ii. 9), and he is "all in all" (iii. 11), the absolute.

The same Christology appears substantially in the Epistle to the Ephesians, which is, indeed, little more than an expansion of that to the Colossians, only the doctrine is not quite so clearly set forth, and there is some discrepancy in the readings of the manuscripts in important passages.

The other minor Epistles ascribed to Paul are not important in respect to their Christology, and so we pass them by. But, in the important Epistle to the Hebrews, remarkable additions are made to the Christology of the early age. Here, the Christ is "appointed heir of all things," the agent by whom God made the *aeons* (αἰῶνας), "a reflected image of his [God's] glory and stamp of his substance" (ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως), and sustains all things by the word of his power. He sits "at the right hand of the majesty above." He is the "word of God" (ῥῆμα Θεοῦ), he is the "first-born;" is superior to the angels, and, in the Old Testament, has been called "God's Son;" the angels serve him; the Old Testament is referred to as calling him by the title of the true God (ὁ Θεός), and his authority is eternal (i. 8, 9). It is Christ who, "in the beginning, established the earth;" the heavens are the work of *his* hands. The universe will perish, but Christ will remain the same for ever, and his years will have no end. The angels are to worship him, for they exist only for the sake of mankind, while Christ is the ultimate object and final cause of all creation. Yet, not-

withstanding this exaltation of nature, he was made a little lower than the angels, so that he might suffer death for the sake of all mankind. In his human form he became perfect by temptation and suffering.

Such is his nature; his function is commensurate with it. He is a priest for ever; by his own blood has obtained eternal redemption and superseded all sacrifices. He has appeared once to remove sin, and will come again to bring such as wait for him to salvation. He took the form of flesh and blood that he might by death destroy the devil, who had the power of death (ii. 14), and deliver mankind, who were subject to fear thereof. He is the "cause of eternal salvation to all that obey him," and in all his achievement is the preserver of mankind (v. 9). He is a priest, not according to a temporary enactment, but in virtue of the power of indissoluble life (vii. 16). The old law is set aside, and its priesthood at an end; for there has come a high priest, holy, free from evil in his nature, blameless in his life, thereby separated from sinners, and become higher than the heavens. He is the mediator of an everlasting covenant, in which the law will be that written eternally on the heart of man.

In these Epistles it is plain a much higher dignity is claimed for the nature and function of Christ. All the fulness of God resides in him; he is even called God, *the* God; still, he is man also, wholly a creature, and dependent on God for existence.

VI. There still remain the Johannic writings, so-called, Epistles and Gospel. The Second and Third Epistles ascribed to John have no Christological value, and require no examination. The First Epistle and the fourth Gospel represent another addition made to

the Christological strata already deposited, not wholly, we fear, in tranquil seas. Here we find the continuation and development of ideas found in the doubtful works attributed to Paul.

But before we speak of the Johannic Christology, we must say a few words by way of preface. The Christians and Jews had, amongst others, this point of ideal agreement: a common reverence for the Messiah, the Christ; but this point of ideal agreement became a point of practical disagreement and quarrel; for the Christians affirmed that Jesus of Nazareth was that Christ, while the Jews declared that he was only a malefactor. The attempt was made by Paul to bring the Jews to attach their reverence for the ideal Christ to the concrete person, Jesus of Nazareth; then discord between the Christians and Jews would end.

Plato had taught, in well-known passages, that God could not come into direct communication with man. Philo, at Alexandria, an older contemporary of Jesus, was of the same opinion. But Philo, though a Platonist in his philosophy, continued also a Jew in the form of his religion, and believed that God did actually come into communication with men; according to his Platonic theology, it must be by mediators, beings between the finite man and the infinite God. At the head of these was the Logos, whom Philo calls a god and god junior (Θεός and Θεὸς δεύτερος). He found a preparation for his doctrine of the Logos in the figurative language of the Old Testament, and Apocrypha, in the personified wisdom of God (Σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ) and word of God (Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ). But in the Old Testament and Apocrypha, this Logos, wisdom or word, does not appear detached from God, but

still attached to him: we think it is still the same with Philo, the Logos is not completely detached from God and become a distinct personality, though this may be thought doubtful. All this has been abundantly discussed of late years, and requires no further examination here.

In this manner he found a point of agreement on the one hand with the Jews, and on the other with the philosophers; so the Jew could accept much of the Platonic philosophy without giving up his form of religion, and his Platonic contemporaries might find Judaism itself dignified into a philosophical scheme. Thus the Platonists and the Jews had a point in common, namely, the Logos, which belonged to the current philosophy of the time, and which Philo had found in the Old Testament. In this way a preliminary step was taken to promote a reconciliation between the philosophers and the Jews; between the representatives of science, voluntary reflection, on the one side, and the representatives of inspiration, passive recipients of God, on the other side. It seems the attempt was not wholly unsuccessful; the Philonic doctrine of the Logos had great influence in the development of philosophy.

We have mentioned already the point of agreement which the Christians had with the Jews, and the point of difference. The first controversy of the Christians with others related to the Messiahship of Jesus. To make out their case, the Christians were forced to alter the features of the expected Messiah a good deal, to make the ideal of prophecy fit the actual of history. This they did by a peculiar manner of interpreting the Old Testament. Specimens of a most remarkable perversion of its language, in order to prove

that Jesus of Nazareth was the Hebrew Messiah, appear in abundance in the New Testament. The Jews rejected the Christian doctrine that Jesus was the Messiah, and along with it the Christian mode of interpreting the Messianic prophecies. In eighteen hundred years little progress has been made in turning the point of difference between them into a point of agreement.

The new Christians had numerous points of general agreement with the monotheistic believers about them, and Paul finds an argument in the inscription on an altar and in a verse from a heathen book. The Christian and the Platonic philosophers agree in this, that there were mediators between man and God. But the author of the Johannic Gospel finds an important and special point of agreement with the Alexandrian philosophy in particular. He accepts the doctrine of the Logos; Christians in general might have done so, as indeed they did, with no detriment to their Christianity. But we find a new and vital doctrine common to Christianity and philosophy — Christ is the Logos.

This author has two important doctrines to set forth, along with many others, namely: the generic doctrine of all Christians, that Jesus was that Christ of the Old Testament (this was addressed to the Jews, and of small consequence to the heathens, who had not heard of the "promise" until they were told of its fulfilment;) and also his peculiar dogma, that Christ was the Logos. If the Jews rejected the first doctrine, as indeed they did, the heathens might accept the other, which really came to pass in due time. We are not, however, to suppose that the author of this scheme wrought with a distinct consciousness of the

work he was doing, and of its relation to the thought of mankind.

In philosophy, as in nature, nothing is done by leaps. In the Hebrew literature, in the Old Testament and Apocrypha, there had been a gradual, but unintentional, preparation for the Philonic idea of the Logos, and a similar preparation is visible in the heathen literature. In the successive elevations of the person of Jesus, which we have already seen in the three earlier Gospels and the Epistles, there was a preparation for the still further elevation of his person. It would have been abrupt, sudden, and unnatural, if Jesus had been called a God in the Gospel according to the Hebrews; it is not surprising at all in the Epistle to the Hebrews. There had been a gradual sloping up, from Jesus considered as the son of Joseph and Mary to Jesus considered as the maker of the worlds, from the man to the God. If extended over many years, the ascent is not violent — it is not per saltum, but gradatim, that the difficulty is overcome. Vires acquirit eundo is true of more than fame. The first Life of Ignatius Loyola, published by Ribadaneira, his friend, fifteen years after Loyola's death, records no miracle; the enlarged edition, some twenty years later, contains no miracle. But at his canonization, more than two hundred miracles were claimed for him, and the depositions of six hundred and seventy-five witnesses were used in the process.

The Christology of the fourth Gospel is quite remarkable. The author states his design at the end of what has been thought the genuine portion of the book: "These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ — the Son of God; and that believing you might have life in his name" (xx. 31).

He begins with the Logos: "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God." These are some of the powers ascribed to the Logos (we will still use the word in the neuter gender, and speak thereof as it): all things were made (ἐγένετο) by it; life was in it, and the life was the light of men; it enlightens every man; it was in the world, but not known thereby; to such as received it, it gave power to become children of a God (τέκνα Θεοῦ); such persons had their origin from a God (ἐκ Θεοῦ), not from man (ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρός). It alone had seen God; it only brought him to the knowledge (ἐξηγήσατο) of men. It was in the bosom of the Father.* At length, the Logos was made flesh (σὰρξ ἐγένετο), and dwelt amongst men, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Nothing is said about the physical birth of Jesus. The author puts his divine character so high that a supernatural birth would add nothing to his dignity. We pass over the historical and general dogmatical peculiarities of the fourth Gospel, to speak of its Christological peculiarities.

Jesus is not merely the first-born of all created things, (Πρωτότοκος πασῆς κτίσεως), but the "only-begotten Son" (τὸν μονογενῆ), he "came down from heaven," and "is in heaven" (ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ); whoso believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life (iii. 13).

The author makes a distinction between the Logos and the spirit (πνεῦμα). Jesus has the spirit, absolutely, not in limited quantities (ἐκ μέτρου). "The

* Clement, of Alex., defines the Κόλπον τοῦ Θεοῦ: τὸ δ' ἀοράτον καὶ ἄῤῥητον. Βαθὺν αὐτὸν κεκλήκασιν ἐντεῦθέν τίνες, ὅτι ἂν περιειληφότα καὶ ἐγκολπεσάμενον τὰ πάντα.

Father has given all things to Christ" (iii. 34, 35).

The Christ is identical with the Father (x. 30, *et al.*); it is not merely an indemnity of function, but of nature. There is a perfect mutuality between the two (xiv. 9, 10, *et al.*); however, there is a difference between the two — with the Father all is primitive; with the Son all is derivative. The Son can do nothing of himself (ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ, v. 19, *et al.*). The Son is also inferior to the Father (xiv. 28, *et al.*). Yet the Son has self-continuing life (ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ, v. 26). He is the bread that came down from heaven; he alone has seen the Father.

Men are not to be saved by piety and goodness, as in the other Gospels (Matt. xxii. 34–40, *et passim*), but by belief in him (iii. 36; vi. 40, *et passim*); they are even to pray in his name (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι μου, xiv. 13, *et al.*); he will send them the Helper (παράκλητος = τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας; πνεῦμα ἅγιον), who will remind them of all Christ's teachings, and teach them all things.

Christ is the Son of man, but he is also the Son of God (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, *passim*), and maintains the most intimate relation with God. He intercedes with the Father for his disciples, and will have the glory which he had before the world was made.

His disciples are wholly dependent on him, without him they can do nothing; he is the vine and they but branches. If they abide in him, they may ask what they will, and it will be given them (xv. 4, *et seq.*). The Helper is to proceed from God, but to communicate the things of Christ (xv. 26; xvi. 15). He desires that there may be the same mutuality and oneness among his disciples as between himself and

the Father (xvii. 21, *et seq. et al.*), and that they may be in the same place with him (24, *et al.*).

The conditions of discipleship are these: a belief in him, which seems to mean a belief that he is Christ and Logos; and love of each other. The consequence of such discipleship is eternal life (ζωὴν αἰώνιον, iii. 15, *et passim*); the immanence of the spirit of Christ and of God (xiv. 17, 23); his disciples shall be where he is (xiv. 3). It is not promised that they shall be what he is or as he is, only where he is. It does not appear that they are to bear the same relation to God which Christ bears to him; they are not to be sons of God in the same sense as Christ.

The same Christology appears substantially in the first Johannic Epistle. However, it is not so fully expressed in the Epistle as in the Gospel, and there are some minor differences of opinion, only one of which is important for the present purpose, namely, that Christ is a sin-offering (ἱλασμός). He is even a sin-offering for all mankind, and not for the Christians alone (ii. 2). The doctrine of the atoning death of Christ, we think, does not appear at all in the Gospel, but is obvious in the Epistle.

The passage which we mentioned before (Matt. xi. 27, and Luke x. 22), seems to belong to the Johannic writings, and not to the synoptic Gospels; but we have no conjecture to offer as to its origin.

We thus see the gradual elevation of the personality of Christ, from the son of Joseph and Mary to the Son of God, with a distinct pre-existence before he "was made flesh," a God who was in the beginning, who made all things, is one with the Father, but still dependent on him, and inferior to him. The Christ in the fourth Gospel strongly resembles the Christ

in the Arian hypothesis of the Trinity; he is, however, widely different from the Christ of the Athanasian hypothesis of the Trinity. The subsequent steps were easily taken, and then Christ was represented as the God (ὁ Θεός), equal with the Father in all things.

## XI

## THE FUNCTION OF A TEACHER OF RELIGION

If the inhabitants of this town were to engage a scientific man to come and dwell amongst you as superintendent of agriculture, and teach you practical farming, it is plain what purpose you would set before him for which he must point out the way and furnish the scientific means. You would say, "Show us how to obtain continually the richest crops; of the most valuable quality, in quantity the greatest, with the least labor, in the shortest time. Show us the means to that end."

It is plain what you would expect of him. He must understand his business thoroughly, farming as a science — the philosophy of the thing, teaching by ideas and showing the reason of the matter; farming, likewise, as an art, the practice of the thing, the application of his science to your soil; demonstrating by fact the truth of his words, and thus proving the expediency of his thought.

Of course he ought to know the soil and climate of the special place; what crops best suit the particular circumstances. He must become familiar with the prevalent mode of farming in the town and neighborhood, and know its good and ill. He should understand the ancestral prejudices he has to encounter, which oppose his science and his art. It would be well for him to know the history of agriculture — general of the world, special of this place — understanding

what experiments have been already tried with profit, what with failure. He should keep his eye open to the agriculture of mankind; ever on the look-out for new animals, plants, roots, seeds, scions and better varieties of the old stock; for richer fertilizers of the soil — no islands of guano too remote for him to think upon; for superior modes of tillage; and more effective tools, whereby man could do more human work with less human toil. He would naturally confer with other farmers about him and all round the world, men of science or of practice, analyzing soils, enriching farms, greatening the crops. He would stimulate his townsmen to think about their work, and to create new use and new beauty on their estates. He need not be very anxious that all should think just as their fathers had done, or plough and shovel with instruments of the old pattern.

But what if he were ignorant and knew no more than others about him, and was yet called "the Honorable Agricultural Superintendent," "the Reverend Professor of Farming," and had been "ordained with ancient ceremonies!" It is plain he could not teach what he did not know. If he knew only the theory, not also the practice, he would be only a half teacher.

What if he was lazy, and would not learn? or bigoted, and stuck in some old form of agriculture, and would never depart from it — the Hebrew, from the time when there was no blacksmith in Israel, and men filed them ploughshares out of lumps of cold iron? or the Catholic form, in the days of Gregory VII, or Innocent III? or the Reformed agriculture, from Luther's and Calvin's time? or the Puritanic, from the age of New England Cotton and Davenport? What if he took some ancient heathen author, Cato, Varro,

Virgil, or Columella, as an infallible guide, and insisted that no crop, however seemingly excellent, could be good for anything unless won from the earth in that old-fashioned way; or declared that no blessing would fall upon a man's field unless he were a professing follower of Elias the Tishbite, and broke up ground with a team not less than four and twenty oxen strong!

What if he were perverse and cowardly, and saw the great errors in the common mode of farming — the theory wrong, the practice imperfect — and knew how to correct them, doubling the harvest while halving the toil, but yet would never tell his better way lest he should hurt the feelings of the people, be thought "radical" and "revolutionary," a "free-thinker," and should lead men to doubt whether it were best to plough and sow at all; or lest they should deny that bread could feed men, or even be raised out of the ground? What if he were silent for fear he should spoil the sale of acorns and beech nuts by introducing wheat and Indian corn? What if he knew a perfect cure for the disease which makes the potato gather blackness, but would not tell it lest the bountiful supply should hurt the market of some men who had whole acres of onions and cabbages looking up for a high price?

What if he knew of better breeds of swine, horses, and horned cattle; better grains, fruits, flowers, vegetables; of better tools to work with, superior barns and houses to store or to live in, and yet kept it all to himself, fearing that he should be called hard names by such farmers as preferred pounding their corn with pestle and mortar to grinding it in a water-mill?

What if he spent his time in abusing the soil, de-

claring it capable of no good thing, ruined, lost, depraved, declaring it was impossible to make any improvement in husbandry, that neither material nor human nature would admit of another step in that direction; and took pains to defend the worst faults of the popular agriculture, insisting that the poorest farms were actually the richest, that tares were indispensable to wheat, the field of the sluggard the best symbol of good farming; and flamed out into elegant wrath against all who dared have better farms and larger crops than their fathers rejoiced in! What could you say to all that?

But on the other hand, what if your superintendent of farming went manfully to his work, studied the soil and put in fitting crops, pointed out improvements to be made in fencing, draining, ploughing, planting, harvesting; introducing better varieties of cattle and of plants; set the people to think about their work, and so made the head save the hands; taught the children to observe the magnificent beauty of New England flowers and trees, and taught them the great laws of agriculture, whereby "each bush doth put its glory on like a gemmed bride," and in three years' time had doubled the productions of the town!

You have asked this young man to superintend your spiritual culture, not the farming of your fields, but of yourself. He must attend to the highest of all husbandry, and rear the noblest crops of use and beauty. Out of the soil of human nature he is to produce great harvests of human character. He is to teach the science of humanity — the art of life. You say to him, "Oh, young man, come and show us how to become the noblest men and women, achieving the greatest amount

of human character of the highest human kind, with the least waste of effort, in the shortest time. Show us the ideal character, the end we ought to reach; the ideal life, the means thereto. We take you for helper, friend, counselor, teacher; not our master to command, not the slave of our pride and prejudice to be commanded; not our vicar, to be, to do, and to suffer in our place, for we do not wish to live by attorney, but each of us on his own account. Be our teacher, helping in the highest work of life. As we commit to you this highest trust, we expect your highest efforts, your noblest thoughts, the manly prayers of your quickened and ever greatening life."

Man is a spirit, organized in matter. In our being is one element, which connects us consciously with God, the cause and providence of the universe, imminent in all and yet transcending all. It is an essential faculty of human nature, belonging to the ontology of man, and gives indications of its presence in all men above the rank of the idiot; the rudiments appear even in him. It acts in all stages of human history; in the mere wild-man, where it appears in only its instinctive form; in the savage, who has no conception of a God, only of the divine in nature, a mighty force, differing in kind from matter and from man; in the barbarian, who makes concrete deities out of plants, and animals, and elements, and men; and in the most enlightened philosophers who compose the academies of science at Paris or Berlin.

It is also the strongest faculty in man, overmastering all the rest; easily excited, not soon put down, and often running to the wildest and most fanatical excess. In rude stages of human history it sometimes

appears as a wild instinct, rushing with blind and headlong violence, a lust after God, a rage of barbaric devotion. Thus in the mythic tale it drives Abraham to sacrifice his only son, and in actual history it impels Cybeles' priests and a whole nation of Jews to odious mutilation of the flesh; or maddens Hebrew priests who call God Jehovah, to butcher their brother priests who named him Baal. Among civilized men, in its abnormal form of action, it can silence and subdue the most powerful human affection. In three-fourths of Christendom the most unnatural celibacy is counted a virtue; how it separates the lover from the one beloved, the husband from his wife, yea, the mother from her child! Its power is visibly written in the great buildings of ancient and modern Rome, of Greece, Palestine, India, Egypt, of all the world. Their pyramids and temples, catacombs and churches, are unmistakable monuments of its power. From old Byzantium to modern Dublin, from Cadiz to Archangel, all Europe is crossed with its sign-manual; the handwriting of humanity upon the world is dotted throughout with visible marks of this mighty yet most subtle force.

See what institutions it has built up — the most widely-extended in time and space. The plough passed over Jerusalem eighteen hundred years ago; the temple of Solomon and his successors has gone to the ground; no family speak now the language of King David; yet on every seventh day, in Boston, New York, Cincinnati, Mexico, in all the great cities of the western world, the scattered Israelites assemble to keep the old religious law. Moses has been dead three thousand years, yet in the name of Jehovah his hand still circumcises every Hebrew boy. What hold the popular theology takes on Christendom! Empires are but

waves in the sea of Buddhism, Christianity, or Islamism, which ripples into popes, and czars, and sultans, or swells into kingdoms and commonwealths that last whole centuries; these perish, while the great religious institution, like the ocean of waters, still holds on. To-day a hundred and fifty millions worship as Mahomet bids; two hundred and fifty millions count Jesus of Nazareth as God; while twice that number — so 'tis said — reckon Buddha as their heavenly lord. Such great combinations of men have never been produced except by the religious element. Theological ideas override the distinctions of nations, nay of races, and the Mongolian Chinese accept the theologic thought of the Caucasian from Hindostan.

History and philosophy alike show that this is the master-element in man — designed for a high place in the administration of his affairs; for as a man is spirit as well as body, immortal not less than meant for time, and has a personal consciousness of his relation to the cause and providence of all, so it is obviously needful that this element which deals with eternity and God, should live upon the strongest and deepest root in human nature. The fact is plain, the meaning and the purpose not hard to see; it has only powers proportionate to its work.

But hitherto the religious element has been the tyrant over all the other faculties of man. None has made such great mistakes, run to such excesses, been accompanied with such cruelty, and caused such wide-spread desolation. All human development is accomplished through the help of experiments which fail. What errors do men make in their agriculture and mechanic arts; how many unsuccessful attempts before they produce a loom, or an axe, simplest of

tools! What mistakes in organizing the family! what errors in forming the state! And even now how much suffering comes from the false political doctrines men adhere to! Look at the countries which are ruined by the bad governments established therein. Asia Minor was once the world's garden, now it is laid waste: what cities have perished there; what kingdoms gone to the ground; for a thousand years its soil has hardly borne a single great man — conspicuous for art, letters, science, commerce, or aught save cruelty in war, and rapacity in peace! In the land whence the ideas which now make green the world once went so gladly forth, camels and asses seem the only undegenerate production. Yet it once teemed with cities full of wholesome life. But all these mistakes are slight compared with the wanderings of the religious faculty in its historical progress. Consider the human sacrifices, the multilations of the body or the spirit, which have been regarded as the highest acts of homage to God. What is the Russian's subjection to a Czar compared to a Christian's worship of a conception of God who creates millions of millions of men only for the pleasure of squelching them down in bottomless and eternal hell! In the Crimea[1] just now, in a single night, the allies burned up a year's provisions for three-and-thirty thousand men — the bread of all Springfield and Worcester for a twelvemonth; in fourteen months a quarter of a million Russian soldiers have perished; Moravia is yet black with the desolations of the Thirty Years' war, whose last battle was fought more than two hundred years ago. But what is all the waste of war, the destruction of property, the butchery of men; what are all the abominations of slavery, compared to the eternal tor-

ment of a single soul! Yet it is the common belief of Christendom that not one man, but millions of millions of men are, with unmitigated agony to be trod for ever under the fiery foot of God and the devil, partners in this dance of the second death which never ends, and treads down a majority of all that are!

A man may be mastered by his bodily lusts, the lowest appetites of the flesh, eaten up by his own dogs and swine, the victim of drunkenness and debauchery. All about us there are examples of this fate! But he may also be mastered by his religious instinct, become its slave, and equally ruined. The Spanish inquistor, thinking he did God service in burning his children for their mode of worship, is a worse form of ruin than the drunkard! Which has most completely gone to waste, the poor uneducated harlot of the street, or the well-endowed minister in Boston who in the name of God calls on his parish to kidnap a fugitive slave? Consider the millions of men tormented by dreadful fear, who dare not think lest God should overhear their doubt — for he is thought to be always eavesdropping, and ever on the watch at the keyhole of human consciousness, hearkening for the footfall of a wandering thought — stab at and run them through, and then impale them on his thunderbolt, fixed in the eternal flame? The evil caused by the perverted appetites of the body is truly vast; but it is nothing when compared to the wide-extending mischief which comes from the perversion of this deepest and strongest instinct of the soul. When a little stream in a country town overflows its banks a few faggots are swept away from the farmer's woodpile, a ground squirrel is drowned out of his hole, a log washed off from the saw mill, a lamb, perchance, or

a straggling calf in some lonely pasture may perish by the flood; next week the bowed grass erects itself, and the freshet is forgot. But when the Amazon breaks over its continental bounds, it sweeps great cities from the earth; it floods wide provinces with its nauseous deluge of slime, which reeks its miasma into the air, poisoning with pestilence one half the tropic land. It is as easy for a giant to strike in the wrong place as for a girl, and the mischief must be proportionate to the strength of stroke. Look over Christendom, heathendom, and see what ghastly evils come from these mistakes.

The function of a sectarian priest is to minister to the perversion of this faculty, to perpetuate the error — sometimes he knows it, oftenest he knows it not, but is one of the tools wherewith mankind makes the faulty experiment. But the teacher of a true form of religion is to take this most powerful element and direct it to its normal work; is to use this force in promoting the general development and elevation of mankind; to husband the periodical inundation of the Amazon, and therewith fertilize whole tropic realms, making the earth bring forth abundantly, not for seven years only, but for seventy times seven, yea, for ever. In that soil which hitherto has borne such flowers as the pyramids, temples and churches of the world, with peaceful virtues in many a realm, such weeds as popery and the false doctrines of the popular theology of Christendom, he is to rear the fairest and most useful plants of humanity, health, wisdom, justice, benevolence, piety, whole harvests of welfare for mankind.

Using the word religion in its wide sense, in the religion of the enlightened man of these times there are

involved three things — feelings, ideas, actions — which follow in this historical and logical order. At first his religious faculty works instinctively, the result is emotional, a mere feeling; the next result is reflectional, the intellect is busy, and thereby he becomes conscious of what instinctively went on, and the feeling leads to an idea; at length it is volitional, in consequence of the feeling and the idea he wills, and determines the inward phenomena to an outward action, a deed.

The teacher of religion is to deal with all these — to work in the plane of feelings, the department of sentiment where life is emotional; in that of ideas, the department of theology, where life is likewise speculative; in that of actions, the department of morality, where life is also practical. As he is to address the intellect, work with ideas, and by these to excite the feelings, and thereby stir men to action, let me begin with the department of theology and thence proceed.

I. Of the teacher of religion in relation to ideas of theology. There is one great scheme of thought called "Christianity," or more properly, the "Christian theology." It is common to all sects in Christendom. Of this the "liberal" have least, the illiberal most; but they differ only quantitatively — in amount, not kind. This is the common soil of Christendom, whence grow such great trees as Catholicism and Protestantism, with the various offshoots from each. From this common inheritance the minister is to take what he thinks true and useful, to reject what he thinks useless, to remove out of his way what he finds baneful.

But he is not to draw merely from this well, he is to get all the theologic truth he can find in other

schemes of theology, not disdaining to be taught by an enemy. For two thousand years France has cultivated the olive and the vine, but lately has translated to her soil Chinese treatises on this branch of husbandry, and found profit in the "heathens' counsel." The early Christians held to the scriptures of the hostile Jew before they thought of claiming "inspiration" for their own gospels and epistles. Nay, Paul of Tarsus did not disdain to quote heathen poets for authority that man is God's child — "for we also are his offspring." The teacher of religion must not be limited to these ancient wells of knowledge, he must dig new springs filled from the universal source, the great mountains of truth. He is to take no church for master — Hebrew, heathen, Mahometan, or Christian, Protestant or Catholic; no man, no sect, no word; but all which can aid for helps. He is not to be content with the "said so" of any man, however famous or great; only with the "it is so" of fact, or the "I find it so" of his own personal experience. He has no right to foreclose his mind against truth from any source.

In dealing with theological ideas his work will be two-fold; first, negative and militant, destroying a false theology; next, positive and constructant, building up a true theology. Look a moment at each.

1. Of the negative and destructive work of theology. Here the teacher will have much to do — both general and special work.

For the popular theology, common to all Christendom, logically rests on this supposition: it is wholly impossible for man, by himself, to ascertain any moral or religious truth; he cannot know that the soul is im-

mortal, that there is a God, that it is right to love men, and wrong to hate; he may have "opinions," but they will be "only whims," belief in immortality, "one guess among many;" there can be no knowledge of justice, no practice of charity and forgiveness. But God has made a miraculous communication of doctrines on matters pertaining to religion; these are complete, containing all the truth that man will ever need to know on religion; and perfect, having no error at all: man must accept these as ultimate authority in all that pertains to religion — to religious sentiments, ideas, and actions. The sum of these miraculous doctrines is called the "supernatural revelation;" it is the peculiar heritage of Christians, though part of it was designed originally for the Jews, and previously delivered to them, who were once the "peculiar people," "the Lord's own," but now in consequence of their refusing the new revelation, which repeals the old, are "cast off and rejected." The Catholic maintains that the Roman church is the exclusive depository of this miraculous revelation, and the Protestant limits it to the Bible; but both, and all their manifold sects, claim to rest on this foundation—the word of God, supernatural, miraculous, exclusive, and infallible. Hence their ministers profess to derive the "power to bind and loose," and claim to teach with an authority superior to reason, conscience, the heart and soul of man. Hence they call their doctrine "divine;" all else is only "human teaching," "founded in reason, but with no authority." Hence theology is called "sacred," not because true, and so far as true — for then the truths which Thales, or which Plato, taught were also "sacred" and "divine;" but as miraculous in its origin, coming from a source which

is outside of human consciousness, and above all the doubts of men. In virtue of this miraculous revelation, the meanest priest ever let loose from Rome, or the smallest possible minister ever brooded into motion at Oberlin or Princeton, is supposed to know more about God, man, and the relation between them, than Socrates and all the "uninspired" philosophers, from Aristotle of Stagyra down to Baur of Tübingen, could ever find out with all the thinking of their mighty heads.

Now in theology the teacher must show that there is no philosophic or historical foundation for this vast fiction, it is "such stuff as dreams are made of;" there is no supernatural, miraculous, or infallible revelation; the Roman church has none such, the Protestant none; it is not the Bible, but the universe is the only scripture of God — material nature its Old Testament, human nature the New, and in both fresh leaves get written over every day. He must show that inspiration comes not supernaturally and exceptionally, by the miraculous act of God, but naturally and instantially, by the normal act of man, and is proportionate to the individual's powers and use thereof; that the test of inspiration is in the doctrine, not outside thereof; its truth the only proof that what man thinks is also thought by God; that all truth is equally his word, and they who discover it are alike inspired — whether truth pertaining to astronomy or religion; that the highest authority for any doctrine is its agreement with fact — facts of observation, or of intuitive or demonstrative consciousness. Surely no man, no sect, no book nor oracle is master to a single soul, for each man is born a new Adam —

"The world is all before him where to choose
His place of rest, and Providence his guide."

In this resistance to the pretended authority of an alleged miraculous revelation there is much to do. The teacher must preach the disadvantages of such a revelation, as Luther preached against the "infallible" pope and Roman church, or as Jesus thundered and lightened against the vain pretensions of the ancient Pharisees. Who shall dare bind the spirit of man and say, "thus far shalt thou reason, but no farther, and here shall thy proud thoughts be stayed?" The smallest priest! But who can stay the movement of those orbs in the spiritual heaven? Only he who, in the constitution of our spirit gave us that great charter which secures unbounded freedom of thought. A spoiled child, a little wayward-minded girl, idiotic even, may command a thousand adult persons, if they be but slaves! What if they are men?

Once the hierarchy of philosophers sought to shut men in the midland seas, between the two Hercules' Pillars of Aristotle and Ptolemy; none must sail forth with venturous keel into the wide ocean, seeking for scientific truth; man must only paddle about the shores, where the masters had named all the headlands and marked out the way. What honor do we pay to men who broke the spell that bound the race? Once kings forbid all thought and speech about the state, the subject must not doubt, but only answer and obey. Where will such tyrants go? Let future Cromwells say. In theology such men are forbid to think, to doubt, to reason, and inquire. "Search the scripture" is made to mean, accept it as an idol. So we see men chained by the neck to some post of authority, their heads also tied down to their feet, for ever hobbling

round and round, picking some trampled grass on the closely nibbled spot, yet counting their limping stumble as the divine march of the heavenly host, and the clanking of their chains as the music of the spheres, most grateful unto God. Now and then some minister comes down and moves off the human cattle, and toes them out to feed on some other bit of well-trod land, while all before us reaches out the heavenly pasture, for which we long, and faint, and die.

It is an amazing spectacle! Modern science has show that the theological astronomy, geology and geography are mixed with whims, which overlay their facts; that the theological history is false in its chief particulars, relating to the origin and development of mankind; that its metaphysics are often absurd, its chief premises false; that the whole tree is of gradual growth; and still men have the hardihood to pretend it is all divine, all true, and that every truth in the science and morals of our times, nay, any piety and benevolence in human consciousness has come from the miraculous revelation, and this alone! Truly it is a teacher's duty to expose this claim, so groundless, so wicked, so absurd, and refer men to the perpetual revelation from God in the facts of his world of matter and of man.

So much for the general basis on which the popular theology of Christendom is said to rest, a basis of fancy. Next, a word of some of its erroneous doctrines.

There are five doctrines common to the theology of Christendom, namely — the false idea of God, as imperfect in power, wisdom, justice, benevolence, and holiness; the false idea of man, as fallen, depraved, and by

nature lost; the false idea of the relation between God and man, a relation of perpetual antagonism, man naturally hating God, and God hating "fallen" and "depraved" man; the false idea of inspiration, that it comes only by a miracle on God's part, not by normal action on man's; and the false idea of salvation, that it is from the "wrath of God," who is "a consuming fire" breaking out against "poor human nature," by the "atoning blood of Christ," that is by the death of Jesus of Nazareth, which appeased the "wrath of God," and on condition of belief in this popular theology, especially of the five false ideas.

I will not now dwell on these monstrous doctrines.* But this scheme of theology stands in the way of man's progressive improvement. It impedes human progress more than all the vices of passion, drunkenness, and debauchery; more than all the abominations of slavery, which puts the chains on every eighth man in this republican democracy! Accordingly the teacher who wishes to secure a normal development of the religious faculties of men, and to direct their powers so as to produce the highest human welfare, must use all the weapons of science against the errors of this theology, opposing them as Luther opposed the pope and Roman church, as Paul and Jesus the polytheism and pharisaism of their time; yes, as Moses withstood the idolatry of Egypt—not with ill-nature, with abuse, but with all the weapons of fair argument.

I know it is sometimes said that a minister ought never to attempt to correct errors in the theology of his

* See "A Discourse of the Relation between the Ecclesiastical Institutions and the Religious Consciousness of the American People, delivered at Longwood, Chester County, Pennsylvania, May 19th, 1855," (New York, 1855,) and "Sermons of Theism, Atheism, and the Popular Theology." (Boston, 1853.)

time; that must be left to the laity or outsiders, for "the Christian church is to be reformed, not from within, but only from without," and "the minister has no right to disturb the peace of the churches by pointing out their false doctrines or wicked practices." Such counsel have I had from men of "high standing" in the Christian pulpit, who practice also what they preach. Let them follow their own advice. But alas, if the deceitful lead the blind!

This destruction and denial is always a painful work. It is the misfortune of the times that now so much of it must needs be done, but the other part will be full of delight.

2. Of the positive and constructant work in theology.

In general he has to show that theology is a human science, whereof piety is the primordial sentiment, and morality the act. A religious life is the practice whereof a true theology is the science. Here, as elsewhere, man is master, and learns by his own experiment; no man is so great as mankind, no scheme of theology to be accepted as a finality; the past is subject to revision by the present, which must also give an account of itself in the future. A real theology must be made up from facts with consciousness and observation, and like all science is capable of demonstration.

In special the teacher must set forth the great positive doctrines of a scientific theology, which is founded on these facts. To follow the five-fold division adove referred to, he is to teach the philosophic idea of God, of man, of the relation between the two, of inspiration, and of salvation.

Of the philosophic idea of God. If the teacher be able-minded, and fitly furnished with spiritual culture, starting from facts of consciousness in himself, of observation in the world of matter, aided by the history of the past and the achievements of the present, it is not difficult for him to set forth and establish the idea of God as infinitely perfect; philosophically from these materials he constructs the idea of the infinite God, the absolute Being, with no limitation. God must have all conceivable perfection — the perfection of being, self-existence, eternity of duration, endless and without beginning; of power, all mightiness; of mind, all knowingness; of conscience, all righteousness; of affection, all lovingness; of soul, all holiness, absolute fidelity to himself. These words describe the idea of God, and distinguish it from all others; but these qualities do not exhaust the perfections of God, only our present conception thereof. To one with more and greater faculties, other qualities must doubtless appear in his conception of the Infinite. Look up at the heavens and consider the worlds of matter revolving there visible to the unarmed sight; multiply those dots of light by the function of the telescope, consider each but the center of a system of other worlds all full of motion and of conscious life; with a miscroscope study a bit of Dover chalk, or slatestone from Berlin, and see in a single inch the million-million tiny monuments of what once was life, its epitaph now published in such small print; close your eyes, and imagine those astral schemes of suns each is the centre of a planetary system, and every orb as full of life as this, but variant in character as in circumstance and condition, then ask if you can comprehend the consciousness of the Being who is the cause and providence of all this — ay, of the creator

of a single drop of ink! What we can know of the infinite God is but a whisper from a world of harmony. Still, though inadequate, the idea may be free from contradiction, and contain no thought which does not represent a quality in God, as the fly on the dome of St. Peter's, who sees but an inch, may yet see the nail he perches on. Thus conscious of the limited extent of human powers, I like not to call God personal, lest my idea be invested with the defect of human personality; or impersonal, lest the limits of matter be crowded about the idea of God. For certainly God's infinite consciousness must differ from our finite and dependent consciousness as the creative power of the universe differs from the instinct action of an unconscious baby grasping the finger of its twin-born mate. The quality and quantity of the infinite consciousness we cannot analyze and so exhaustingly comprehend. Still this positive fact remains to us — the infinitely perfect God. This I think the highest thought which mankind has yet reached, the grandest idea in the consciousness of humanity.

How different is this from the theological conception of God whereof the ethical character is as revolting as the Trinitarian arithmetic thereof is absurd. What a difference between the infinite God and the wrathful God of the popular theology — as he appears in the New England Primer, in Michael Angelo's last Judgment — in every "Christian scheme of divinity!"

Of the philosophic idea of man. Starting from indisputable facts it is easy to show what a noble nature there is in man, so endowed with vast capabilities. I wonder that any one can think meanly of this chief creation of God, can talk of "poor human nature;"

why, in comparison with the instinctive aspiration of our nature the loftiest achievements of a Leibnitz or a Jesus seem low and little. What a history is there behind us! Man began his career with no inheritance save what was covered with his skin; without material or spiritual property — no house, nor tool, nor garment, nor breakfast laid up for to-morrow, no science, law, literature, customs, habits, manners or even language; out of him was material nature, in him rude human nature. See what has thence risen up in the thirty or forty thousand years of his probable existence. What a panorama of triumph lies there behind us! Surely the history of man is a continual victory, the triumph of what is spiritual over the merely animal, of conscious reflection over mere brute, instinctive, animal desire. It is the Infinite Providence which planned the campaign and guides the victorious march. Even the errors and follies of mankind — the experiments which fail — are steps forward, only not straight forward. The teacher ought to understand the historical development of mankind, that in the panorama of what has been done he may demonstrate the nobility of our nature, and show the certainty of our triumph at the last over all the transient evils of our condition.

He may take the body for his text, far more "wonderfully made" than the Hebrew psalmist could conceive of three thousand years ago, but hopefully more than "fearfully." What masterly workmanship it is which puts these elements together — this "handful of enchanted dust," making an instrument so perfect for a purpose which is so grand! He can unfold and publish the body's laws, the celestial mechanics of this microcosm, as the astronomers disclose the mode of action of the forces in the sky. Every law of the body is a

commandment from the most high God, who enacts geology in tables of stone, but in scriptures of flesh has writ the law of flesh.

He may take the part of man not material for his theme, and show the unity of spirit in such diversity of faculties — intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious — disclosing the natural function of each, all in their order combining to achieve the destination of mankind.

He can show that human nature, on the whole, is just what God meant it to be, no mistake of his careless hand, not damaged by the "Devil;" that it is God's perfect means for his perfect purpose; that the parts are also adequate to their several functions — the body exactly fitted to the body's work, the intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious faculties exactly suited to the duty they have to do. He can show this by metaphysical analysis, and demonstrate it all by deduction from the infinite perfection of God; or by the synthesis of actual history, show how all these continually work together for good. For the freedom of man — his power of self-rule, direct by his simple will, or mediate through outward helps of circumstance and condition — enlarges like his property and other power, from age to age; and the quantity of human virtue is ever on the increase. Human nature unfolds itself by trial, by experiment, wherein man makes as many mistakes as a child in learning to think, to speak, to walk, to read and write, yet learns by every error, yea, by every sin. The misstep of the individual or nation is but one incident of the universal human desire of perfection as end and progress as the means thereto; and as we prefer health, strength, and beauty before sickness and deformity, before pain and death, not less

naturally does man, at last, reject all but truth in things intellectual, all save justice in things moral, and holds fast to holiness and love. Our history is not a retreat, it is a march forward. Mythology fancies a "fall;" history records an ascension. The tempting devil disappears — a theologic fancy of the younger age; the guiding Providence remains a scientific fact. Nothing is more clearly demonstrated than the continual progress of humanity, I mean the regular growth of every excellence. Let a man make a pictorial view of any special art — the trade of the smith, farmer, carpenter, clothier, sailor; or of any science — arithmetic, astronomy, chemistry; or of morality and religion; and since the historic age began, see what a continual progress there has been! Combine all these into one grand panorama of humanity, and lo, what a monument of our greatness, what a prophecy of our destination it affords! Man started with nothing; in one or two thousand generations see what he has done; this naked and penniless Adam turns out the thriftiest child of God. Behold his material and spiritual estate!

The religious teacher will set forth the ideal of what man should be; it is the prayer of human nature, through the imagination ascending from every human faculty, which longs for its complete and perfect development. What a future this ideal foretells, to be made by man, as the past has been, partly by his instinctive action outrunning his personal will, partly by his conscious calculation, setting the purpose and thereto devising means! This is plain — there must be a destination proportionate to the nature of man, a fulfilment of the soul's desires. By the facts of the past and present, history shows that it is likely to be

so, and by the facts of consciousness — intuitive and demonstrative — by deduction from the idea of a perfect God, human nature shows that it must be so and shall. Indeed the infinite perfection of God is collateral security for the promise, made in our nature itself, that normal desire shall ultimately have its satisfaction, and the ideal of man shall one day be the actual of humanity.

Man's immortality must be dwelt upon. This can be shown not by things outside of us, not at all by quoting stories which cannot be true, but by the development of facts given instinctively in the consciousness of all. How easy it is to show that an immortality of blessedness awaits the race and each individual thereof, wherefrom not even the wickedest of men shall ultimately be cut off. Surely the Infinite God must have made man so that humanity contains all the forces needful for the perfect realization of the ideal thereof.

The philosophic idea of man gathered up from common and notorious facts, how different it is from the "poor human nature" we read of in theological books, and which so many ministers whine over in sermon and in prayer!

Of the philosophic idea of the relation between God and man. This must correspond to the character of God himself. In the world of man as the world of matter he must be a perfect cause to create, a perfect providence to direct; must create and provide from a perfect motive — the desire to bless; for a perfect purpose — for blessedness as end; and furnish perfect means, adequate to achieve the end. On God's part it must be a relation of love — an infinite desire to

bless, attended with infinite power to bless. God is capable of nothing else. Of all possible worlds he must have made the best. The evil passions which the Christian theology ascribe to God are impossible. He a "jealous god;" he a "consuming fire;" he have "wrath," and keep it "for ever!" he torment men for his own delight of vengeance; his wisdom mock when their fear cometh! He say to a single child of humanity, "Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels; I never knew you!" Even the meanest of mortal mothers meets her son, all stained with blood which cries out against him, and at the foot of the gallows folds the felon in her arms, with "My son! my son! would to God that I could die for thee!" And do you believe that the cause and providence of yonder stars and of these little flowers will doom to endless hell a child of his! Shame on the worse than heathen thought! A savage might easily make the monstrous error, attributing his own love of vengeance to his God; overburdened with veneration for antiquity, even the noblest men might repeat the mistake; and celibate monks of the dark ages — victims of the darker theology which ruled them with its whip of fear — might rejoice in the cruel, dreadful thought. Let us be just to all, gentle in our judgment of theologic as other wanderings — but let no thoughtful man do less than spurn the malignant doctrine far away. Suffering there is; suffering there may be hereafter, must be, perhaps, but the present and the future misery must be overruled for the good of all, the good of each; it is God's medicine, not poison from a "devil."

There are no types in human affairs to represent

the relation of the Infinite God to man. The words of tenderest and most purely affectional human intimacy best convey the idea; so let us call God our Father and our Mother too.

How different is this from the theological idea of the relation between God and man — the imperfect God and the depraved man — the antagonistic relation!

Of the philosophic idea of inspiration. The Infinite God is everywhere in the world of matter; its existence is a sign of him, for infinite power is the background and condition of these particles of dust. Here is matter — take one step and there is God, it is not possible without him — the derived depending on the original. Matter is manifest to the senses, God to the spirit. He acts where he is, not anywhere an idle God. The powers of matter are but modes of God's activity; nature lives in him — without his continual active presence therein nature were not. He

> "Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
> Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the tress;
> Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
> Spreads undivided, operates unspent."
> "To him no high, no low, no great, no small;
> He fills, he bounds, connects and equals all."

He is equally present in the world of man, the world of spirit: it also depends on him; he lives in it, and it in him. He is also active therein. God is nowhere idle. Human life as much depends on him as the life of nature. Just so far as any human faculty acts after its normal mode, it is inspired. Truth of thought is the test of intellectual inspiration; justice,

of moral; love, of affectional; holiness, self-reliant integrity, of religious inspiration.

All the world of matter is subject to law — constant modes of operation of the forces thereof, which of necessity are always kept. So there are modes of operation for the human spirit, whereto obedience is partly of free will; for while matter is wholly bound, man is partially free. When we act in obedience to these ideal laws, then God works with them, through them, in them; we are inspired by him. So inspiration is not a transient fact, exceptional in the history of mankind, and depending on the arbitrary caprice of an imperfect Deity, but constant, instantial, and resulting from the laws which the Infinite God enacts in the constitution of man; its quality ever the same, its degree varying only with the original genius of each person, and the faithful use thereof. We grow and live thereon as the tree grows by the vegetative power residing in itself, and in the earth, the water, the air, and sun. Miraculous inspiration exists only as a dream, or a cheat; a fancy of the self-deceived, or a pretence of the deceivers. Normal inspiration is not limited to theological or religious men, but is the common heritage of all. The housewife in her kitchen, the smith in his shop, the philosopher, poet, statesman, trader, all may alike communicate with God, and receive liberal supply. Inspiration of this sort belongs to the nature of man's spirit, which depends on Infinite God as the flesh on finite matter; one may have much, another little, and the use and form thereof will be most exceedingly unlike — as vegetation differs in the forest, field, and garden, but all comes from the same elemental air and water, earth and sun. It is not limited to one age, but is

diffused to all, its amount continually increasing with the higher forms of human life.

How much this differs from the theological idea of inspiration — miraculous, unnatural, and often "revealing" things absurd and monstrous!

Of the philosophic idea of salvation. To realize the ideal of human nature, that is salvation; to develop the body into its natural strength, health, and beauty; to educate the spirit, all its faculties at normal work, harmoniously acting together, all men attaining their natural discipline, development, and delight! Part of it we look for in the next world, and for that rely upon the infinite perfection of God; part of it we toil for here, and shall achieve it here. To do a man's best, to try to do his best, that is to be "acceptable to God," to "make our peace with him," who is of all preserver and defence. There is no "wrath of God" to be saved from; no "vicarious atonement" to be saved by; no miracle is wrought by God; he asks only normal service of man, and as he is infinitely perfect, so must he have arranged all things, that all shall work for good at last, mankind be saved, and no son of perdition e'er be lost. Suffering there is — there will be. I, at least, cannot show why it is needful in the world's great plan, nor see the steps by which this suffering will end, nor always see the special purpose that it serves — but with the certainty of such a God the ultimate salvation of all is itself made sure.

How different is all this from the theological idea of salvation — "hard to be won, and only by a few!"

How much we need a theology like this — a natural theology, scientifically derived from the world of mat-

ter and of man, the product of religious feeling and philosophic thought! Such ideas of God, of man, of the relation between the two, of inspiration, of salvation — it is what mankind longs for, as painters long for artistic loveliness, and scholars for scientific truth; yea, as hungry men long for their daily bread. The philosopher wants a theology as comprehensive as his science — a God with wisdom and with power immanent in all the universe, and yet transcending that. The philanthropist wants it not less, a God who loves all men. Yea, men and women all throughout the land desire a theology like this, which shall legitimate the instinctive emotions of reverence, and love, and trust in God, that to their spirits, careful and troubled about many things, shall give the comfort and the hope and peace for which they sigh! How much doubt there is in all the churches which the minister cannot appease; how much hunger he can never still, because he offers only that old barbaric theology which suited the rudeness of a savage age, and is rejected by the enlightened consciousness of this! How much truth is there outside of all the sects— how much justice and benevolence and noblest piety, which they cannot bring in, because this popular theology, like a destroying angel armed with a flaming fiery sword, struts evermore before the church's gate, barring men off from beneath the tree of life, anxious to hew off the heads of lofty men, and gash and frighten all such as be of gentle, holy heart.

So much for the teacher's relation to ideas, the instrument he is to work withal, and waken the religious feelings into life.

II. Of the teacher of religion in his relation to the feelings connected with religion.

With theological ideas of this scientific stamp it is easy to rouse the religious feelings, the great master emotions, and then rear up that whole brood of beautiful affections whose nests such an idea of God broods over and warms to life. If God be preached to men as endowed with infinite perfection, he at once is felt as the object of desire for every spiritual faculty; to the mind, infinite wisdom — the author of all truth and beauty; to the conscience, infinite justice — the creator of all right; to the affections, infinite love — the father and mother of all things which are; to the soul, infinite holiness — absolute fidelity. So here is presented to men the Infinite God — perfectly powerful, wise, just, loving, and holy, self-subsistent, self-reliant. Is any one an atheist to such a God? No, not one! Who can fail to love him? the philosopher, who throughout all the world seeks truth, the science of things? the poet and the artist, who hunt the world of things and thoughts all through for shapes and images of beauty? the moralist, who asks for ideal justice and rejoices to find it imperative in nature and in man? the philanthropist, who would fold to his great heart pirates and murderers, and bless the abandoned harlot of the street, yea, have mercy on the "Christian" stealer of men in Boston? the sentimentalist of piety, who loves devotion for itself, who would only lie low before the divine as an anemone beneath the sky, and with no dissevering thought, in joyous prayer would mix and lose his personal being in mystic communion with the infinite consciousness of God? Surely all these in the Infinite God will find more than the object which elsewhere they

vainly seek. And the great mass of men and women, in our cares and sorrows, in our daily joys and not infrequent sins, we all cry out for the infinite perfection of God, and bless the feet of such as bring the idea upon their tongues revealing words of peace! Love of God springs up at once, and strongly grows; what tranquility follows, what youthful play of all the faculties at first, at length what manly work! What joyous and long-continued delight in God! We long then to keep all the commandments he writes in nature and in man. When it is God's voice that speaks, how reverently shall we all listen for each oracle. How shall I respect my own body when I know it is a human Sinai, where more than ten commandments are given — writ on tables which no angry Moses ever breaks, kept eternally in the universe, which is the ark of God's covenant, holding also the branch that buds for ever, and the memorial-bread of many a finished pilgrimage. From this mountain God never withdraws, no thundering trumpets forbid approach, but the Father's voice therein for ever speaks. And how shall I reverence this spiritual essence which I call myself, where instinct and reflection for ever preach their sermon on the mount, full of beautitudes for whoso hears and heeds! How readily will all the generous feelings towards men spring up when such a sun of righteousness shines down from heaven with natural inspiration in her beams; not New England grass grows readier beneath the skies of June. How dutiful becomes instinctive desire; how desirable is conscious duty then! Is the way hard and steep to climb? the difficulty is lessened at the thought of God, and full of noblest aspirations, heartiest trust, the brave man sallies forth, victory perching on his banner.

What consolation will such ideas afford men in their

sorrows! Let me know that infinite wisdom planned all this world, a causal providence, and perfect love inspired the plan; that it will all turn out triumphant at the last — not a soul lost in the eternal march, no suffering wasted, not a tear-drop without its compensation, not a sin but shall be overruled for good at last; that all has been foreseen and all provided for, and mankind furnished with powers quite adequate to achieve the end, for all, for each: what a new motive have I for active toil! yea, what consolation in the worst defeat! I can gird my loins with strength, and go forth to any work; or defeated, wounded, conquered, I can fold my arms in triumph still, looking to the eternal victory.

The teacher of religion is with men in their joy and in their sorrow. Old age and youth pass under his eye; he is the patron saint of the crutch and the cradle, and with such ideas — the grandest weapon of this age — he can excite such pious emotions in the maiden and the youth as shall make all their life a glorious day, full of manly and womanly work, full of human victory; and in the experienced heart of age he can kindle such a flame of hope, and trust, and love, as shall adorn the evening with warm and tranquil glories — saffron and purple, green and gold — all round the peaceful sky, and draw down the sweet influence of heaven into that victorious consciousness, and while his mortal years become like the morning star, paling and waning its ineffectual fire, the immortal shall advance to all the triumphs of eternal day.

Hitherto priests and ministers of all forms of religion — I blame them not — have sought to waken emotions, mostly of fear before the God of their fancy, a dark and dreadful God. With such ideas of him,

they had no more which they could do. So the popular religion has been starved with fear, and with malignant emotions even worse. It is under this dreadful whip that men have builded up those pyramids, and mosques, and temples, and cathedrals, and formed those great institutions which outlast empires. Such things belong to the beginning of our pilgrimage. When man was a child he thought as a child. Now shall he put childish things away.

So much for the teacher's relation to the feelings connected with religion.

III. Of the teacher of religion in relation to acts of morality. Religion begins in feeling, the emotional germ; it goes on to thought, the intellectual blade, budding, leafing, and flowering forth prophetic; it becomes an act, a deed, the moral fruit — full of bread of life for to-day, full of seeds of life for the unbounded future. Morality is keeping the natural laws written of God in the constitution of matter and of man. These we first feel by our instinctive emotions, and next know by the calculation of reflective thought, and at last practice by the will, making the ideal of emotion and of thought the actual of practice in daily life. The whole great field of morals belongs to the jurisdiction of the teacher of religion.

1. He must show the practical relation of man to the world of matter, the basis of all our endeavors. Here he must set forth the duty of industry, of thrift, of temperance — the normal use of what nature affords, or industry and thrift provides. He is to learn the natural rule of conduct by studying the constitution of matter, the constitution of man, and then apply this law of God to human life. He can show what use man

should make of his mastery over the material world, the function of property, the product of industry, in the development of the individual and the race, and explain the services which vassal matter may render to imperial man. He is to point out the conditions on which we depend for health, strength, long life, and beauty — all the perfections of the body — the way to live so as to keep a sound spirit in sound flesh — handsome and strong. These things belong to what may be called the material basis of morals.

2. He must also teach the true human morals, the rule of conduct which should govern man in regulating his own personal affairs, and in his dealings with mankind. Here, too, from the constitution of human nature he is to unfold the rule of conduct, the eternal right, and make the application thereof to all the forms of collective and of individual human life.

Here come the great morals which we call politics — the relation of state with state, and of the government with the people. This comes directly under the cognizance of the teacher of religion, especially in this country, where all the people are the government, and where such an intense interest is felt in political affairs, and so many take an active part in the practical business of making and administering the laws. If politicians commonly aim to provide for their own party, or at best only for their own nation, he must consult for the eternal right, which is the joint good of all the people, yea, of mankind also. They derive their rule of conduct from the expediency of to-day, nay, often only from the whim of the moment, he his from the justice of eternity; they consult only about measures, and defer to statutes of the realm, compacts, compromises, and the constitution of the land, he communes with prin-

ciples, and defers only to the laws of God, the constitution of the universe.

He must preach on politics, not as the representative of a party but of mankind, and report not the mean counsels of a political economy, which consults for one party or one nation, for one day alone, but declare the sublime oracles of political morality, which looks to the welfare of all parties, all nations, and throughout all time. He must know no race but the human, no class but men and women, no ultimate lawgiver but God, whose statute book is the world of matter and the world of men — justice the sole finality.

I know some men say "religion has nothing to do with politics, and the minister should never preach on the political rights and duties of the citizens of democratic America!" They mean morality has nothing to do with politics; that is, in making and administering the laws, no consideration is to be had of charity, truth, justice, or common honesty. Certainly they mean nothing else. On what other supposition can we be asked to support the fugitive slave bill and the decisions of kidnappers' courts! I know men in pulpits, "men fearfully and wonderfully made," who say "the minister should have nothing to do with politics"— except to vote and talk as his task-masters and owners imperatively command; that is, he should never preach in favor of good laws or against wicked ones, never set forth the great principles of morality which underlie the welfare of the state, nor point out measures to embody and apply mere principles; and never, never expose the false principles and wicked measures which would lead the community to ruin. "For Christianity has nothing to do with the politics of men; the minister's business is 'to preach the gospel,' 'to save souls,'

he speaks 'as to dying men,' who have here no continuing city, but only seek one which is to come; therefore is the Sunday left for preaching on what does not concern this world!" Such ministers ought to have nothing to do with anything, and soon will have what they ought.

The teacher of religion nothing to do with the political actions of the people, one whole department of conduct — which most intimately concerns the welfare and the character of every child — left out of the jurisdiction of morality and religion! Look at the conduct of the founders of the great world-sects! Had Mahomet nothing to do with politics? On the ruins of the idolatrous structures of old, out of Hebrew and Christian stones, cemented with his own wisdom and folly, he built up the commonwealth of Islam, wherein an hundred and fifty million men now find repose. Moses nothing to do with politics! As the poetic tale relates, he led two million men out of Egypt, and therefrom built up a new state with ideas of politics far in advance of his times. Jesus nothing to do with politics! In the fourth Gospel — not an historical document, but mainly a religious fiction — he says, "My kingdom is not of this world;" but in the more authentic documents, the first Gospel and the third, he promises that his twelve disciples "shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel!" and actually laid down the moral principles of political conduct, which if applied according to his direction, would revolutionize every state, and make a Christian commonwealth of the world. Actually at this day the words of Mahomet, Moses, and Jesus are appealed to as the supreme law in Turkish, Hebrew, and Roman courts. What an intense irony it is when the professor

of the gospel says, "Christianity has nothing to do with politics," and the professor of law tells his pupils "Christianity is part of the common law," "the Bible the foundation of common jurisprudence!"

All the great Christian leaders were also men of politics, their word of religion became flesh in the state. Look at Augustine, at Ambrose of Milan, at the patriarchs of the Eastern churches, at the metropolitans of the West, at Gregory VII., at Innocent III., all men whose word became law! Augustine was a Roman organizer, filled with the ideas of Paul of Tarsus. What an influence he had in destroying the pagan state, and building what he esteemed the "City of God." Bernard, the monk of Clairvaux, made popes and unmade them, and out of his lap shook an army of crusaders upon the Holy Land. Bossuet had as lasting an influence on France as the "grand monarque;" Louis claimed to be himself the state, but the priest was so more than the king. Luther controlled kingdoms; the word of powerful John Calvin became the constitution of Geneva, it moulded the Swiss cantons, and had a powerful political influence wherever thoughts of that great thinker went.

Look at the founders of the American churches — at Robinson, and Cotton, and Hooker, and Davenport, and Wilson; at Higginson and Roger Williams! Ask Edwards and Hopkins, ask Mayhew and Channing, if the minister should teach that politics have nothing to do with religion; and religion nothing to do with politics! You might as well say the sailor had nothing to do with the ocean, and New England manufacturers no concern with the Connecticut and the Merrimac, with wind, or water, or fire! Look at the actual politics of America, at the open denial of the higher law,

at the politician's insolent mock against all religion, and see the need that the teacher should lay down the great moral principles of human nature, and apply them to the political measures of the day. It is only when the minister is a purchased slave that he tells men Christianity has nothing to do with political conduct, and praises the practical atheist as the "model Christian."

Then come the morals of society. Here the teacher must look at the dealings of men in their relations of industry and of charity, and set forth the mutual duty of the strong and the weak, the employer and the employed, the educated and the ignorant, the many and the few. Natural religion must be applied to life in all departments of industrial activity; farming, manufacturing, buying and selling must all be conducted on the principles of the Christian religion, that is, of natural justice. The religious word must become religious flesh — great, wide, deep, universal religious life. The deceit and fraud of all kinds of business he must rebuke, and show the better way, deriving the rule of conduct from human nature itself.

I know there are men, yea, ministers, who think that "Christianity" has no more to do with "business" than with politics. It must not be applied to the liquor trade, or the money trade, or the slave trade, or to any of the practical dealings of man with man. It is not "works" but "faith" which "saves" the soul. So the minister who preaches a "gospel" which has nothing to do with politics, preaches also a gospel which has nothing to do with buying and selling, with honesty and dishonesty, with any actual concern of practical life. Leave them and pass them by, not without blame but yet with pity too.

Look at the social life of man,— see what waste of toil and the material it wins; here suffering from unearned excess, there from want not merited; here degradation from idleness, there from long-continued and unremitting drudgery. See the vices, the crimes, which come from the evil conditions in which we are born and bred! These things are not always to continue. Defects in our social machinery are as much capable of a remedy as in our mills for corn or cotton. It is for the minister to make ready the materials with which better forms of society shall one day be made. If possible he is to prepare the idea thereof; nay, to organize if he can. What a service will the man render to humanity who shall improve the mechanism of society, as Fulton and Watt the mechanism of the shops, and organize men into a community, as they matter into mills. Yet it is all possible and it is something to see the possibility.

Then come the morals of the family. Here are the domestic relations of man and woman, lover and beloved, husband and wife; of parent and child, of relatives, friends, members of the same household. Here, too, the teacher is to learn the rule of conduct from human nature itself and teach a real morality — applying religious emotions and theological ideas to domestic life. The family requires amendment not less than the community and state.

There is an ill-concealed distrust of our present domestic relations, a scepticism much more profound than meets the ear or careless eye. The community is uneasy, yet knows not what to do. See, on the one hand, the great amount of unnatural celibacy, continually increasing; and on the other, the odious vice which so mars soul and body in an earthly hell. The two ex-

tremes lie plain before the thoughtful man, both unnatural, and one most wicked and brutal. Besides, the increase of divorces, the alteration of laws so as to facilitate the separation of man and wife, not for one offence alone, but for any which is a breach of wedlock, the fact that women so often seek divorce from their husbands — for drunkenness and other analogous causes — all show that a silent revolution is taking place in the old ideas of the family. Future good will doubtless come of this, but present evil and licentiousness is also to be looked for before we attain the normal state. Many European novels which are characteristic of this age bring to light the steps of this revolution.

The old theology subordinates woman to man. In the tenth commandment she is part of her husband's property, and so, for his sake, must not be "coveted." In the "divine" schedule of property she is put between the house and the man-slave; not so valuable as the real estate, but first in the inventory of chattels personal. Natural religion will change all this. When woman is regarded as the equal of man, and the family is based on that idea, there will follow a revolution of which no one, as yet, knows the peaceful, blessed consequence not only to the family, but the community and the state.

Most important of all come the morals of the individual. The teacher of religion must seek to make all men noble. He is not to make any one after the likeness of another — in the image of Beecher or Channing, Calvin, Luther, Peter, Paul or Jesus, Moses or Mahomet, but to quicken, to guide, and help each man gain the highest form of human nature that he is ca-

pable of attaining to; to help each become a man, feeling, thinking, willing, living on his own account, faithful to his special individuality of soul. I wish men understood this, as their individuality is as sacred before God as that of Jesus or of Moses; and you are no more to sacrifice your manhood to them than they theirs to you. Respect for your manhood or womanhood, how small soever your gifts may be, is the first of all duties. As I defend my body against all outward attacks, and keep whole my limbs, so must I cherish the integrity of my spirit, take no man's mind or conscience, heart or soul, for my master — the helpful all for helps, for despots none. I am more important to myself than Moses, Jesus, all men, can be to me. Holiness, the fidelity to my own consciousness, is the first of manly and womanly duties; that kept, all others follows sure.

With such feelings of love to God, such ideas of God, of man, of their relation, of inspiration, of salvation — with such actions, it is easy to see what form a free church will take. It will be an assembly of men seeking to help each other in their religious growth and development, wakening feelings of piety, attaining ideas of theology, doing deeds of morality, living a great, manly, religious life; attempting, also, to help the religious development of mankind. There must be no fetter on the free spirit of man. Let all men be welcome here — the believer and the unbeliever, the Calvinist with his absurd trinity of imperfect Godheads, the atheist with his absurdity of denial; diverse, in creed, we are all brothers in humanity. Of course you will have such sacraments of help as shall prove helpful. To me, the ordinances of religion are piety

and morality; others ask bread, and wine, and water; yet others, a hundred other things. Let each walk the human road, and take what crutch of support, what staff of ornament he will.

In these three departments the teacher of religion is to show the ideal of human conduct, derived from the constitution of man, by the help of the past and the present; and then point out the means which lead to such an end, persuading men to keep their nature's law, and to achieve its purpose. Nay, he must go before them with his life, and demonstrate by his character, his fact of life, what he sets forth as theory thereof; he cannot teach what he does not know. He only leads who goes before. A good farm is the best argument for good farming. A mean man can teach nobleness only as the frost makes fire. A low man in a pulpit — ignoble, lazy, bigoted, selfish, vulgar — what a curse he is to any town; an incubus, a nightmare, pressing the slumbrous church! A lofty man, large minded, well trained, with a great conscience, a wide, rich heart, and above all things a great pious soul, who instinctively loves God with all his might — what a blessing to any town is a manly and womanly minister like that! Let him preach the absolute religion, the service of God by the normal use, discipline, development, and delight of every limb of the body, every faculty of the spirit, and all the powers we possess over matters and man; let him set forth the five great ideas of a scientific theology, and what an affluence of good will rain down from him!

What a field is before the religious teacher, what work to be done, what opportunities to do it all! Here is a false theology to be destroyed; but so destroyed

that even every good brick or nail shall be kept safe; nay, the old rubbish is to be shot into the deep to make firm land whereon to erect anew; out of the good of the past and present a scientific theology, with many a blessed institution, is to be builded up. Great vices are to be corrected — war between state and state; oppression of the government over the people; there is the slave to be set free — bound not less in the chain of "Christian theology" than with the constitution and the law. The American church is the great bloodhound which watches the plantations of the south, baying against freedom with most terrific howl. "Christian theology" never breaks a fetter, while Christian religion will set all men free! Woman is to be treated as the equivalent of man, with the same natural, essential, equal, and unalienable rights; here is a reform which at once affects one half the human race, and then the other half. Here is drunkenness to be abolished; it is to free states what slavery is to the south. Poverty must be got rid of, and ignorance overcome; covetousness, fraud, violence, all the manifold forms of crime, vices of passion, the worser vices of calculation, these are the foes which he must face, rout, overcome. What noble institutions shall he help humanity build up!

The great obstacle in the way of true religion is the false ideas of the popular theology. It has oversloughed human life, has checked and drowned to death full many a handsome excellence, and gendered the most noisome weeds. So have I seen a little dainty meadow, full of fair, sweet grass, where New England's water-nymph, the Arethusa, came in June — fresh as the morning star, itself the day-star of a summer on high — yea, many a blessed little flower bloomed

out. But a butcher and a leather-dresser built beside the stream which fed the nymph, disgorging therein a flood of pestilence, and soon in place of Arethusa and her fair-faced sister flowers, huge weeds came up from the rank slime, and flaunted their vulgar, ugly dresses all the summer long, and went to seed peopling the spot with worse than barrenness!

Man has made great mistakes in his religious history. Worse than in aught beside. The enforced singleness of monk and nun, the polygamous conjunction of a master and his purchased beasts of luxury at Constantinople or Jerusalem, or at New Orleans, or at Washington; the brutish vice of ancient cities, which swallows down woman quick into an actual pit worse than that fabled which took in the Hebrew heretics and their strange fire; the political tyranny of Asia Minor and Siberia; the drunken intemperance which reels in Boston and New York, companion of the wealth which loves the spectacle; all this is not a worse departure from the mutual love which should conjoin one woman and one man, from natural justice, from wholesome food and drink, than the theological idea of God is a departure from the actual God whom you meet in nature as the cause and providence of all the universe, and feel in your own heart as the Father and Mother of the soul! Let not this amuse you. The strongest boy goes most astray — furthest if not oftenest. It is little things man first learns how to use — a chip of stone before an axe of steel; how long he rides on asses before he learns to yoke fire and water, and command the lightning to convey his thought!

How much this religious faculty has run to waste — rending its banks, pouring over the dam, or turning the priest's loud clattering mill of vanity, not

grinding corn for the toilsome, hungry world. Man sits on the bank, in mortars pounding his poor bread with many a groan, mourning over political oppression, the lies of great and the vanity of little men, over war and want, slavery, drunkenness, and many a vice, while the priest turns to private account this river of God, which is full of water! Will it always be so? Always! Once the streams of New England crept along their oozy beds, where only the water-lily lay in maiden loveliness, or leaped down rocks in wild majestic play. None looked thereon but the woods, which, shagged with moss, bent down and dipped therein the venerable beard; or the moose, who came with pliant lip to woo the lilies when sunrise wakened those snow-clad daughters of the idle streams; or the bear, slaking her thirst in the clean water, or swimming with her young across; or the red man, who speared a salmon there and gave the river a poetic name. Look now: the woods have withdrawn, and only frame the handsome fields; the moose and the bear have given place to herds and flocks; the river is a mechanic — sawing, planing, boring, spinning, weaving, forging iron — more skilful than Tyrian Hiram, or Bezaleel and Aholiab, once called inspired, and clothes the people in more loveliness than Solomon in all his glory e'er put on; the red man, as idle as the stream which fed him, he is now three million civil-suited sons of New England, all nestled in their thousand towns, furnished with shop, and ship, and house, and church, and rich with works of thought.

It is the little streams we utilize first. New England inherited the culture which a thousand generations slowly won; but it took her two hundred years to catch and tame the Merrimac, still serving its apprentice-

ship. It is chiefly the small selfishness of man we organize as yet, not the great overmastering powers; these wait for more experienced years. But the great river of religious emotion — the Danube, the Nile, the Ganges, the Mississippi, the Amazon of each human continent, which, fed from tallest heaven-touching hills, has so often torn up the yielding soil, and in its torrent dashed the ruins of one country on the next in a deluge of persecution, crusade, war — one day a peaceful stream will flow by the farm and garden which it gently feeds, turn the mills of science, art, literature, trade, politics, law, morals; will pass by the cottage, the hamlet, the village, and the city, all full of peaceful men and women, industrious and wealthy, intelligent, moral, serving the Infinite God by keeping all his law. What an age will that be when the soul is minister, not despot, and the church is of self-conscious humanity!

Do you want a teacher to do for you the noblest work that man can do for man; to tell you of the Infinite God, of the real man, not the fabulous, of the actual divine scriptures, of the live religion; to help waken it in you, and organize it out of you; engineering for the great religious enterprises of mankind, and leading the way in all the progressive movements of the race? Then encourage this young man in his best efforts, rebuke all meanness, cowardice, dishonesty, affectation, sloth, all anger, all hate, all manner of unfaithfulness. Cheer and bless him for every good quality; honor his piety and morality; reverence all self-reliant integrity, all self-denying zeal. Bid him spend freely his costliest virtue, 'twill only greaten in the spending. If he have nothing to say, let him say it alone; make no mockery of hearkening where

ears catch only wind, and the audience get cold; give him empty room. But if he have truth to tell, listen and live!

Do you want such a minister as superintendent of the highest husbandry, the culture of your soul? or a parasite, a flunkey, who will lie lies in your very face, giving you all of religion except feelings, ideas, and actions; a man always quoting and never living; making your meanness meaner after it is baptized and admitted to the church, and stuffed with what once to noble men were sacraments! Then I will tell you where to find such "by the quantity," at wholesale. I will show you the factories where they are turned out for the market. Nay, give me any pattern of minister which you require, I will lead you to the agent, who will copy it exactly, and from dead wood now stored away in churches laid up to dry, in three years furnish the article, made to order as readily as shoemakers' lasts, and by a similar process, "warranted sound in the faith"— if not in that "once delivered to the saints," at least in that now kept by the sinners! There are towns in Virginia which breed slaves for the plantations and the bagnios of the south; and also northern towns which breed slaves for the churches. God forgive us for taking his name in vain!

I know some men think the minister must be a little mean man, with a little mind, and a little conscience, and a little heart, and a little small soul, with a little effeminate culture got by driveling over the words of some of humanity's noblest men; who never shows himself on the highway of letters, morals, science, business, politics, where thought, well girt for toil, marches forth to more than kingly victory; but

now and then creeps round in the parlors of society, and sneaks up and down the aisles of a meeting-house, and crawls into the pulpit, lifting up his cowardly and devirilized face, and then with the words and example of Moses, and Samuel, and David, and Esaias, and Jesus, and Paul before him, under his eye, in a small voice whines out his worthless stuff which does but belittle the exiguity of soul which appropriately sleeps before him in the pews, not beneath him in spirit, only below him in space. I know men who want such a minister, that will "preach the gospel," and never apply the Christian religion to politics, to business, to society, to the life of the family or the individual, not even to the church! An admirable gospel for scribes, and pharisees, and hypocrites! Glad tidings of great joy is it to the hunkers and stealers of men: "Religion nothing to do with politics; the morality of Jesus not to be applied to the dealings of man; the golden rule too precious for daily use!" Such a man will "save souls"—preserved in hypocrisy and kept on ice from youth to age! How he can call his idolatry even worshipping the Bible I know not; for you cannot open this book anywhere but from between its oldest or its newest leaves there rustles forth the most earnest human speech, words which burn even now when they are two or three thousand years old!

How much a real minister of religion may do! He deals with the most concerning of all concerns, what touches the deepest wants of all men. How a man in such a calling can be idle, or indifferent, or dull to himself, I see not. The covetous man may be weary of money, a voluptuary sicken with pleasures, and one ambitious and greedy of praise get tired of new access

of power, and loathe his own good name; but how a minister of religion can ever tire of toil to bless mankind is past my finding out. How much a real teacher of absolute religion may bring to pass! Earth had never so palpable a need of a live minister with living religion in him, I care not whether you call it Christianity or no — but the feelings, the ideas, and the actions of such a religion as human nature demands! The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers — where are they?

No man has so admirable an opportunity as the minister to communicate his best thoughts to the public. The politician has his place in the Senate, and speaks twice or thrice in a session, on the external interests of men, chiefly busying himself about measures of political economy, and seldom thinking it decorous or "statesmanlike" to appeal to principles of right, or address any faculty deeper than the understanding, or appeal to aught nobler than selfishness. The reformer, the philanthropist, finds it difficult to gather an audience; they come reluctantly, at rare intervals of business or pleasure. But every Sunday custom tolls the bell of time. In the ruts of ancient usage men ride to the meeting-house, seat them in venerable pews, while the holiest associations of time and place calm and pacify their spirit, else often careful and troubled about many things, and all are ready for the teacher of religion to address their deepest and their highest powers. Before him lies the Bible — an Old Testament, full of prophets and rich in psalm and history; a New Testament, crowded with apostles and martyrs, and in the midst thereof stands that great Hebrew peasant, lifting up such a magnificent and manly face. The very hymn the people

sing is old and rich with holy memories; the pious breath of father, mother, sister, or perhaps some one more tenderly beloved, is immanent therein; and the tune itself comes like the soft wind of summer which hangs over a pond full of lilies, and then wafts their fragrance to all the little town. Once every week, nay, twice a Sunday, his self-gathered audience come to listen and to learn, expecting to be made ashamed of every meanness, vanity and sin; asking for rebuke, and coveting to be lifted up towards the measure of a perfect man. It is of the loftiest themes he is to treat. Beside all this, the most tender confidence is reposed in him — the secrets of business, the joy of moral worth, the grief of wickedness, the privacy of man's and woman's love, and the heart's bitterness which else may no man know, often are made known to him. He joins the hands of maidens and lovers, teaching them how to marry each other; he watches over the little children, and in sickness and in sorrow is asked "to soothe, and heal, and bless." Prophets and apostles sought such avenues to men, for him they are already made. Surely if a man, in such a place, speaking Sunday by Sunday, year out, year in, makes no mark, he must be a fool!

There was never such an opportunity for a great man to do a great constructive work in religion as here and now. How rich the people are — in all needed things, I mean — and so not forced to starve their soul that life may flutter round the flesh; how intelligent they are! no nation comes near us in this. The ablest mind finds whole audiences tall enough to reach up and take his greatest, fairest thought. There is unbounded freedom in the north; no law forbids thought, or speech, or normal religious life.

How well educated the women are! A man, with all the advantages of these times — rapidity of motion from place to place, means of publishing his thought in print and swiftly spreading it by newspapers throughout the land, freedom to speak and act, the development of the people, their quick intelligence to appreciate and apply a truth — has far more power to bless the world religiously than the gospels ascribe to Jesus of Nazareth with all his miracles! What was walking on the water compared to riding in a railroad car; what "speaking with tongues" to printing your thought in a wide-spread newspaper; and what all other feigned miracles to the swift contact of mind with thoughtful mind!

Close behind us are Puritans and Pilgrims, who founded New England, fathers of all the north. They died so little while ago that, lay down your ear to the ground, you may almost fancy that you hear their parting prayer, "Oh, Father, bless the seed we planted with our tears and blood. And be the people thine!" Still in our bosom burns the fathers' fire. Through all our cities sweeps on the great river of religious emotion; thereof little streams also run among the hills, fed from the same heaven of piety; yea, into all our souls descends the sweet influence of nature, and instinctively we love and trust. All these invite the scientific mind and the mechanic hand of the minister to organize this vast and wasted force into institutions which shall secure the welfare of the world. Shall we use the waters of New England hills, and not also the religious instincts of New England men? What if a new Jesus were to appear in some American Nazareth, in some Massachusetts Galilee of the Gentiles, and bear the same relation to the consciousness

of this age as the other Jesus to his times, what greater opportunities with no miracle would he now possess than if invested with that fabled power to restore the wanting limb or to bring back the dead to life!

The good word of a live minister will probably be welcomed first by some choice maiden or matron, the evening star of that heaven which is soon to blaze with masculine glory all night long. What individuals he may raise up! What schools he may establish, and educate therein a generation of holy ones! If noble, how he may stamp his feeling and his ideas on the action of the age, and long after death will reappear — a glorious resurrection this — in the intelligence, the literature, the philanthropy; in the temperance, and purity, and piety of the place! How many towns in America thus keep the soul of some good minister, some farmer or mechanic, lawyer or doctor — oftenest of all, of some good religious woman, long after her tomb has become undistinguishable in the common soil of graves? And how do we honor such?

> "Past days, past men — but present still;
> Men who could meet the hours,
> And so bore fruit for every age,
> And amaranthine flowers; —
> Who proved that noble deeds are faith,
> And living words are deeds,
> And left us dreams beyond their dreams,
> And higher hopes and needs."

All things betoken better times to come. There was never so grand an age as this — how swiftly moves mankind! But how much better we can do! Religious emotion once flowed into the gothic architecture of Europe, the fairest flower of human art —

little blossoms of painting and sculpture, philosophy, eloquence, and poetry, all hidden, and yet kept within this great compound posy of man's history. The Catholic church has her great composers in stone, artists in speech, and actors in marble; the Protestant its great composers in philosophy and literature, with their melody of thought, their harmony of ideas. One day there must be a church of mankind, whose composers of humanity shall think men and women into life, and build with living stones; their painting, their sculpture, their architecture, the manhood of the individual, the virtue of the family and community; their philosophy, their eloquence and song, the happiness of the nation, the peace and good will of all the world.

Oh, young man, gird your loins for this work; spare not yourself but greatly spend. And you who ask his help — how much you all can do! The world waits for you! a truth of religion, it will burn its way into history, not as thunder to destroy, but as sunlight to create and bless. The human author may be buzzed about in the whisperings of bigots and self-misguided men; rooks may caw, and owls may hoot at him; the rats of the state may gnaw at his deeds, and the church's mice nibble at his feelings; nay, he may stand on the scaffold, be nailed to a cross — a thief on either hand — and mocking words be writ against his name; or he may mix his last prayer with the snapping of fagots. Resistance is all in vain: his soul, in its chariot of fire, goes up to the calm still heaven of holy men, and his word of truth burns in to the consciousness of the world, and where he went, bare and bleeding, with painful feet, shall mankind march to triumph and great joy!

It is amazing how much a single man may do for good. The transient touch of genius fertilizes the recipient soul. So in early autumn the farmer goes forth afield, followed by his beast, bearing a few sacks of corn, and dragging an inverted harrow adown the lane. All day long the farmer, the genius of the soil, scatters therein the seed, his horse harrowing the valleys after him; at night he looks over the acres newly sown, the corn all smoothly covered in, puts up the bars behind him, speaks kindly words to his half-conscious fellow-laborer, "a good day's work well done, old friend!" and together they go home again, the beast with ears erect and quickened pace, as mindful of his well-deserved rack. For months the farmer sees it not again; but all the autumn long the seed is putting down its root, and putting up its happy blade. All winter through it holds its own beneath the fostering snow. How green it is in spring! and while that genius of the soil has gone to other fields and pastures new, how the winds come and toss the growing wheat, and play at wave and billow in the green and fertile field! In the harvest time what a sea of golden grain has flowed from out that spring of seed he opened and let loose! So in the Christian mythology, Gabriel's transient salutation, "Hail, thou that art highly favored amongst women," was in full time followed by a multitude of the heavenly host, singing "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men!"

## XII

# FALSE AND TRUE THEOLOGY

**But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.— MATT. xv. 9.**

I ask your attention to some thoughts on the ecclesiastical and the philosophical methods of studying theology.

The religious is the strongest of all our spiritual faculties. This is shown not only by the wide spread and long duration of particular forms of religion, like Buddhism, Christianity, Mahometanism, embracing different nations, and even races, or by the monuments which these have left in all peopled space and all civilized time; but also by the ease with which it puts down the great passions of the body, and still more by the power which it has to overmaster the mind, the conscience, and the affections of man, and to subdue the great interests of civilization.

If this mighty faculty be directed according to its nature, it works the highest welfare and secures the most rapid progress, the most elevated civilization to the individual, the nation, and to mankind; but if it be misdirected against its nature, it hinders the progressive development of man's faculties, and leads to the most terrible ruin of the individual and the nation. It will help man, or else hinder him, and that with a force proportionate to the vast power of the faculty itself.

We all live by eating and drinking; the normal appetite inclines mankind as a whole to the proper

articles of food and drink suited to the climate and the stage of civilization; but the appetite may be perverted and misdirect the individual, so that he eats and drinks things not fit for him, or uses them in excessive quantity, and is poisoned by what should feed him. Look about you at the terrible examples of each form of error — gluttons who have "eaten their own heads off," thinking no more than the swine they feed upon and resemble; drunkards who have drowned themselves in the Red Sea of their own debauchery, the Pharaohs of intemperance, their nobler faculties strangled long before their flesh is cold! The religious faculty — call it soul — may err as much as the appetite for food, and the mistake produce consequences not less hideous on the individual and the nation. A church may poison the soul with foul doctrines as easily as a grog shop may poison the body with foul drink.

The animals are all unprogressive in their character; but little room is left them for individual will or reflection. Their action is almost all spontaneous, instinctive, compulsory of their organization, not free of their individual personality. Hence they are tools of a power which works through them, rather than agents acting on their own account. So they do not err in choice of food or drink or mode of conduct. If an individual does so, no tribe of animals ever makes that mistake.[1] They grow no wiser by experiment, they suffer from none, for they try none.[2] But God has made man — within certain and somewhat narrow limits — his own master. We are progressive, and must make experiments in the art of life. Instinct is the sole and perfect guide for the beast, representing not his thought, but God's thought for him. But

man is partly ruled by instinct, which is God's thought, and partly must he rule himself by his own personal reflective will. After he gets beyond the wildness of his primitive state, the reflective action is much more than the instinctive. He makes great errors in his experiments. Individuals do so. John is a drunkard; Lewis and Margaret are dandies, both come to nothing, one but a cup of drink, the others a bundle of fine clothes. Nations likewise do so: the Swedes are a people of drunkards; the Greeks and Romans were debased by the vices of their civilization, and barbarous, half-naked men tore these effeminate dandies limb from limb.

Similar mistakes are made by individuals and by nations in the development of the religious faculty, and the consequences are worse than even drunkenness; thereof history furnishes terrible examples, on a small scale by individuals, or on a great scale by nations — Abraham sacrificing his only son, Spain butchering her subjects by the hundred thousand, because they could not believe what was unbelievable.

In mankind's religious development, as in yours and mine, three things are indispensable, namely — emotions, religious feelings, which come directly from the spontaneous action of this religious faculty itself; ideas, which come from the reflective action of the intellect; and actions, which come from the will, influenced by emotions and ideas.

These ideas are the middle term between emotions and actions; they reach forward and create deeds, they reach backward and cause emotions, which create new deeds. The sum of ideas in religious matters is what men call theology — thoughts about God, about

man, and about the relation between God and man. Now as true religion is piety, the love of God, and morality, the keeping of his laws; so a true theology is the science whereof religion is the practice — theology the intellectual part, as piety is the emotional part, and morality the practical part.

A true theology helps both piety and morality; a false theology hinders each. Now the character of the theological ideas which men attain to and believe in will depend mainly on the method in which they seek for theologic truth; a false method will ultimately lead to a false theology and its consequences, and a true method will ultimately lead to a true theology and its consequences; the road from Boston to Salem will never carry the travelers to Roxbury, though so much nearer at hand. As the theology which is accepted has such an immense influence on the individual, the community, the nation, or the race which accepts it, you see how important it is to have a right method in theology. It is not the highest end of life to attain wealth, honor, power, fame, but to build up a religious character, noble in kind, great in quantity; to be a complete man, with a whole, sound body, developed normally, with a whole, sound spirit, normally developed in its intellectual, its moral, its affectional, and its religious part. To a nation I think there is no one thing which so much hinders its development as a false theology, for that chains the spirit and then drives it to an unnatural and a false church, an unnatural and false state, community, family, and so on; and there is no one thing which so much helps a nation to a masterly development as a true theology, which sets the spirit free, and then leads it to found a natural and true church, a natural and true state,

community, family, and so on. This being so, it is of the utmost importance to you and me that the nation should have this true method in theology, for that is to the general activity of the people what the constitution is to its political activity, what his tools are to the blacksmith, farmer, spinner or weaver.

As the theology determined the action of the religious faculty, and as that is the strongest faculty in man, you see at once what wide, deep and controlling force theological ideas have on the entire concerns of men. Let me give an example. About a hundred and twenty or a hundred and thirty years ago the Methodist sect began in England. At first it was to the British church what the Protestant Reformation was to the Roman — an awakening to new religious life, and putting that into new practical forms. It began with George Whitfield, the greatest ecclesiastical orator, and John Wesley, the greatest ecclesiastical organizer and statesman that Christendom had seen for a thousand years. By this power to persuade and this power to organize men did these two persons give it such a start that now the sect is some twelve millions strong, has wide influence in Great Britain and America, and has done much service in controlling the vices of passion, and in keeping the humblest, poorest, and least cared-for part of the population from falling still lower down. But this sect, with its many millions, has never produced a great man, a great discoverer, organizer, administrator, philosopher, poet, or historian. It had one respectable scholar, Adam Clarke, who amassed considerable learning, though he used it without originality or good judgment. He died in 1832, and since then no Methodist has had a European reputation. I do not know of an Amer-

ican Methodist, more than American Catholic, who is eminent for anything but devotion for his church. Yet there is talent enough born into the Methodist church; it affects powerfully the poorest and least educated class of men in the Northern states, who furnish able men for its preachers. When the Methodist synod met in Boston a few years ago we were astonished to see such a collection of superior heads; they would average better than any American legislature I have seen. Everybody knows what zeal, what industry, what self-denial there are in the sect. Yet little comes of all this talent, because the theology and the discipline of the sect crush all free individuality of mind, conscience, heart, and soul. Just in proportion as a man becomes thoroughly a Methodist, he ceases to be an individual man with a free mind, a free conscience, free affections, and freedom of soul; instead thereof he becomes a vulgar fraction of his sect, one twelve-millionth part of the Methodist church. Not many years since a Methodist preacher said, "We preach religion without philosophy, and that is the secret of our success." He meant that they proclaimed doctrines which must be believed without appeal to reason, and commanded deeds to be done without regard to conscience. The consequence is that men with large reason and conscience either will not enter the Methodist church at all, or if they do, they thence presently come out, or stay only to have their minds pinched to the narrowest compass, and their conscience stifled stone dead.

There is one method which has been adopted by all the Christian sects in their theological investigations. Some, like the Methodists and Catholics, and

most of the Trinitarians, adhere to it with all their might; others, like the English church, the Unitarians, the Universalists, and the Lutherans, care less for it, and break away in practice from what they all profess in theory. I call this the ecclesiastical method.

There is another method adopted by philosophical men in their scientific investigations in these days, but rejected by all the great sects; some earnestly and violently repudiating it, while others reject its theory though they follow it more or less in practice. This I call the philosophical method.

So far as they are ecclesiastical, all theologians follow the ecclesiastical method; it is instantial with them. So far as they are philosophical, all scientific men follow the philosophical method; it is instantial with them. Let me say that when some ecclesiastical men study philosophy, they abandon the ecclesiastical method; hence men like Dr. Whewell in England, and others, have attained great eminence in science, and done large service therein.

I. Let me say a word of the ecclesiastical method. This consists of an assumption and a deduction. Men assume that certain words spoken or written are a direct, miraculous and infallible communication from God, and therefore are of ultimate authority, for all time, in all matters of religion and theology. To these men must subordinate their intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious faculties. That is the assumption.

From these words certain doctrines are deduced, and enforced on men as the miraculous and infallible commands of God which must be accepted in spite of the instinctive or reflective action of man's mind, con-

science, heart, and soul. These are called doctrines of "revealed religion," and men must believe them, howsoever unreasonable, immoral, unlovely, and irreligious. That is the deduction.

The Christian sects differ on many other things, but they all agree in assuming this miraculous and infallible communication from God as the ultimate authority, and in deducing thence all their doctrines; so however unlike their conclusions, all agree in their assumption and deduction. There is diversity of doctrines, but unity of method. The Catholic finds that communication in the Bible, in ecclesiastical tradition, and in the decisions of the Roman church — expressed by the infallible general council, and enforced by the infallible Pope — which three are the ultimate authority of the Catholic, all summed up and represented, however, by the infallible Pope. The Protestant finds that communication only in the Bible, which is the ultimate authority of Protestantism, and is to him what the Pope is to the Catholic. Some Protestant sects reject the Apocrypha as no part of the miraculous communication; some individual Protestants reject certain doubtful books of the Old Testament or the New; but all the little Protestant sects, Trinitarian, Unitarian, Nullitarian, and the three great Christian sects, the Greek, the Roman, and the Teutonic churches, agree in the assumption and in the deduction. By the same method the Roman gets his infallible Pope, and the Teuton his infallible Bible, the Trinitarian his trinity, the Unitarian his unity, the Damnationist his eternal torment, and the Salvationist the redemption of all men.

Now the Christian sects do not *prove* that the words they take as ultimate authority in matters of religion

are a divine, miraculous, and infallible communication from God; they do not prove this from facts of observation in the world without, or facts of consciousness within. That fact is assumed. In the whole compass of theological literature there is no proof of the fact; there is no evidence which would lead an impartial jury to think for a moment that there was the shadow of a proof. There is no direct evidence adequate to prove it: there is no personal evidence — the testimony of known men, carefully collected together and tested; and there is no circumstantial evidence —the testimony of known things. It is assumption, and no more. It is thought wicked to doubt what none has ever proved, and what never can be proved.

From this assumption the theologians deduce certain doctrines, and read them as mysteries, revelations, commandments, resting on God, things which must not be questioned. If you reject them you are to be damned for ever.

Look at some of the most remarkable of these ecclesiastical doctrines thus deduced. I shall not take great religious or theological truths, such as the existence of God, the immorality of man, his dependence on God and accountability to him; for these are facts of consciousness which are common to all forms of religion, in the enlightened, the civilized, the half-civilized, the barbarous, and even the savage state, and all of these have been demonstrated, it seems to me, till the argument for each can be analyzed into propositions, each of which is self-evident, and requires no proof. Whatever the theologians may say, none of these four great truths rest at all on the theological method for their support. I shall take seven dogmas,

which are certainly no part of natural religion, and are claimed to be very important parts of the miraculous revelation. Here they are:—

1. The existence of the devil, a personal being, totally and absolutely evil, with immense power, which he uses to thwart God and ruin men.

2. The total depravity of man: the first man was created good, but fell from his innocence, and "In Adam's fall we sinned all"— so that we are totally depraved, and the human race has turned out just as God meant it should not turn out.

3. The wrath of God: he is in a state of continual indignation against this totally depraved mankind, and is "angry with the wicked every day."

4. The eternal torment of the immortal soul: the wrathful God has prepared an everlasting hell, where the absolutely evil devil will act as his lieutenant-governor and torment sinful mankind, the immense majority of the human race, for ever.

5. The incarnation of God: God is one and yet three — the Father, who is eternally the Father; the only begotten Son, who is eternally the Son; and the Holy Ghost, who proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son. By God the Holy Ghost, God the Father — who is also God the Son and God the Holy Ghost — overshadowed Mary, the spouse of Joseph, and she bore God the Son, who was successively God a baby, God a boy, God a youth, and God a man, eating, drinking, dying, was sacrificed, raised again, and ascended to heaven, and all the time was still God.

6. The atonement, the death of God: he was killed by wicked men, and rose again, taking away the sin of part of the totally depraved mankind, through the

mitigation of God's wrath, so that a certain portion are destined to eternal happiness, while the rest must go down to eternal woe, prepared for the devil and his angels.

7. The salvation of men by belief: you must believe all these six doctrines, or else perish everlastingly.

Now, there is no circumstantial, no personal evidence for the truth of any of these seven monstrous doctrines. You find no devil on the face of the earth to-day, no footsteps of him in the "Old Red Sandstone," not a track of his step amid all the "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation;" no detective police could ever find the faintest scent of this creature. Ask the minister, "How do you know there is such a devil?" and he answers, "It is a doctrine of the divine and miraculous revelation." Ask again, "How do you *know* the revelation is divine and miraculous, from God?" and if he be an honest man, and understand his profession as well as the street sweepers their business, he will say, "I do not *know* it, I only find it convenient to *assume* it. I have not a particle of evidence for it."

Then there is no circumstantial or personal evidence for the total depravity of man. Wise men you find, none wholly wise; good men, none wholly good; bad men also, but none totally bad. Take the human race in every age, wisdom prevails over folly, goodness over badness, virtue over vice; even Lawrence and Stone,[3] it is thought, made more honest bargains than deceitful ones. South Carolina representatives in Congress are sober all the forenoon. Cruel masters are exceptional, even amongst slaveholders. Murderers are always in the minority; thieves and sturdy beggars likewise, and even liars. History records no

fall of man, but rather an ascent, a continual increase in wisdom, justice, philanthropy, piety, and trust in God.

There is no evidence for the wrath of God, and an eternal hell; earthquakes, volcanoes, storm, pestilence, death, indicate no ugliness on God's part, no lack of love. In the world of time and space you cannot find a single fact of observation which indicates the wrath of God. Take any man, the worst or the best, who is not debauched by indulgence in the ecclesiastical theology, not poisoned by these odious doctrines, and in him you cannot find a fact of consciousness which indicates wrath on God's part. Nay, in the clear mirror of the human soul, wiped clean from the breath of that contagion, is God's infinite love reflected; the natural man looks there, and sees the dear Father and Mother of all mankind. Ask the minister how he knows of God's wrath and eternal torment; ask the council of ministers at North Woburn [4] how they know that God will damn all babies unbaptized and dying newly born, and if you could beguile them into honest speech, they would tell you "It rests on the authority of some one who died many years ago; we do not know who said it, nor what authority he had for saying it."

So it is with each of these other doctrines — the incarnation of God in a miraculous baby, the death of God by crucifixion, the resurrection of the dead God; the atonement, God the Son appeasing God the Father, this one undivided third part of the Trinity appeasing the two other undivided third parts. There is nothing which can be called circumstantial or personal evidence for these things; they all rest on the *said so* of somebody who knew no better than we; who took his dreams of the night or his whimseys of the day for the facts of the universe.

In the Catholic church you will be told of the miraculous immaculate conception of Mary, the mother of God, of the miracles of St. Valentine, to whom this day is consecrated, of St. Dennis, who had his head cut off, and walked home with it under his arm. All this rests on the same sort of evidence as these seven dogmas just named; on the "said so" of somebody who knew nothing about it. There is no more reason for believing the miraculous birth of Jesus, the "Son of God," than of Mary, the "mother of God," or of Anna, the "mother of God's mother," "the grandmother of God;" the whole rests on nothing. The Catholic church says that you must believe in the infallible Pope, and do the works which the church commands, and you shall find life everlasting; else you shall find hell everlasting. There is as much reason for that as there is for the Protestant mode of salvation; there is none at all for either.

This method leads to monstrous evils. To assume that there was such a communication from God, to submit man's highest faculties to such outside authority, in the long run always degrades these faculties, and leads men in God's name to despise the very highest gifts he ever gave to man. The odious doctrines thus deduced drive some men to utter irreligion, even to atheism. All the way from Greek Epicurus to German Feuerbach,[5] it is the follies taught in the name of God that have driven men to atheism. But speculative atheism is always exceptional, rarer than murder. Multitudes of men believe these doctrines because they are taught in the name of religion — and what fear follows, what distrust of self and of man, what belittlement of all the intellectual powers! How such men turn off from fair normal life, and

hope to serve God and win heaven by some unnatural trick! Go to a meeting of scientific men, who are discussing geology, physiology, what you will, and how patiently they look for facts, and examine and cross-examine every witness, to be sure they get at a real fact, not at a dream. Thence how carefully they induce the law of the facts; what respect do they show for man's mind; what fairness of investigation, what freedom from confinement to the old! Go to a meeting of ministers, discussing the science of religion, and what a difference! what sophistry in "investigation," what contempt for mind, what neglect of facts, what fear of inquiry! With them credulity is counted one of the greatest of virtues; belief without evidence or against evidence is a part of piety. To call for proof is to be a "sceptic," an "infidel." All questions must be settled by quoting texts, which represent not facts of the universe, but the opinion of some man, perhaps unknown, who died hundreds of years ago. Not only is it impossible to attain truth in this way, but this method of trying for it debases the mind, the conscience, the heart, and the soul of those who take the pains. Children who go apart to study their lessons, and come together to recite them, learn truth by this process, and strengthen their mind; but if they separate to dream, and assemble to tell their dreams, what good comes of it? Dreams for facts, stupidity for science. Alas, there are children of a larger growth! So much for the ecclesiastical method.

II. The philosophical method is just the opposite of this. It is quite simple; it rests on two assumptions. The first is the faithfulness of the human faculties, the senses for sensation, the spiritual powers for

their spiritual function, intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious. The other assumption is the existence of this outward world, whereof the senses testify.

Then from facts of consciousness within, and facts of observation without, the theological inquirer seeks to learn the nature of God, of man, and the relation between the two, with the duties, rights, and destination of man, which come therefrom. By this method the inquirer takes the whole universe as the revelation of God. The world of matter presents the phenomena of God which are manifest to the senses of man, while the world of man presents him the other phenomena of God which are manifest to the mind, the conscience, the heart, and the soul. He would learn from all the history of mankind, and gather what previous ages had learned. The human race is many thousand years old; all civilized nations have their religious books, the Bibles of the nations, writ by men of genius and piety; none contains all truth, nor only truth, but each has some, for man is always religiously inclined, always looks for the true, the beautiful, the just, the good, and the holy; and God has not made these things hard to find, accessible to great men only, the inheritance of but a single people, a revelation only to learned men. The conscience of the child out-travels oft the conscience of the sire, and the wife intuitively knows more of God and religion than her philosophic husband ever dared to think. Each of the six great world-sects has taught much truth; I think the Christian most of all; and besides that, it has the transcendant character of Jesus — a man of such noble courage, with such abhorrence of hypocrisy, such tender love for mankind, and piety so inward, blossoming out into the "strong and flame-like flower" of such

morality! The Catholic church has much to teach; every Protestant sect also a great deal. I just spoke of the Methodists, showing the evil which comes from their false method, and ecclesiastical discipline; they have a fervor of religious emotion, a zeal for the spiritual welfare of neglected *white* people, which makes them exceedingly useful.

The inquirer after religion and theology by the philosophical method will take the good which past ages have to teach. But man's nature is more than his history; so the chief source of theologic truth will be found in man himself, in the instinctive and reflective action of his faculties in their normal use and development. Men talk of inspiration, the contact of the human spirit with the infinite God, the incoming of Deity to our soul. I think it is a fact, not miraculous and exceptional, but normal and instantial; just so far as man uses his natural faculties in their natural way, the divine power of the universe flows into him and acts by him, as vegetative force into these handsome plants. Faithful use of the faculties is the human condition of this divine inspiration, and truth, beauty, justice, love, integrity, these are its tests. I know there are moments of ecstasy, which are to common hours what genius is to ordinary men, what spring is to the year, and in this precious flower-time of spiritual action much is done, nor would I ever neglect these handsome opportunities; I would take every flower which was offered to me then, but with cool, calm reason, in my soberest moments would examine it, and learn its value.

Now if a man tries this philosophical method, he will come to a true theology, which shall be to the actual facts of God's nature, man's nature, and the

relation between them, what astronomy is to the facts of the solar system. The science of theology will then be based on facts of observation and of consciousness; not on mere words, which represented the dream of some deluded man, but on the facts of the universe, writ in matter without us and mind within. Then theology will be a progressive science, enlarging its scope of comprehension. Mere belief will pass into certain knowledge. For theology, as from astronomy, chemistry, medicine, miracles will disappear, and law take their place — the constant mode of operation of the natural powers which God gave to matter and to spirit. Those seven odious dogmas which I have just named will pass off. So the specters of the night, made of tormenting dreams which disturbed the little girl who read stories of hobgoblins before she slept, are all gone when she opens her eyes, looks out of the window, and sees the apple trees unfold their fragrant, roseate beauty to some May morning's rising sun! The idea of a capricious, changeable, and wrathful God, damning men by the hundred million, paving his wide hell with the skulls of babies not a span long,[6] their parents racked above that fiery floor — all that will vanish, and instead thereof shall your soul be gladdened by the perpetual presence of the Infinite Power, Wisdom, Justice, and Love, the Perfect God of the universe, who is presnt in all matter, in all spirit, acting everywhere by law, perfect cause and perfect providence, Father and Mother to you and me and all that are. No longer shall you dream that you are totally depraved, your nature hateful to God, you no lawful child of his, but mothered by the devil's dam, with no natural right to heaven, ruin your final fate. You shall account

yourself the grandest work God has ever made, created from a perfect motive, the desire to bless, and for a perfect end, the highest welfare possible for you, and furnished with faculties which are a perfect means thereto. Then you shall not fear and crouch down, and skulk about the world like a rat in the daylight of a city street, ashamed of your nature, afraid of your instincts, emasculating your intellect, your affections, and your soul; but with upright walk shall you go about your daily life, knowing that you have duties to do, rights to enjoy, serving your God by the normal discipline, development, use, and enjoyment of every limb of the body, every faculty of the spirit, every power which you possess over matter and over man. What heed will you then take to do every manly duty for its own sake, making conscience supreme, and to bear any cross laid upon you which should be borne. If you mistake and overstep the natural law of right — as you will, especially in early life — mortified with shame you will turn back to the natural and better way. Religion will not be a regeneration, being born again, a change of nature, a cutting something native off or tying something foreign on; but a development of nature, what the blossom is to the bud, what growth to manhood or womanhood is to girl or boy. Conscious of immortality, living now the everlasting life, you will look forward to that future heaven, which instinct tells even the savage of, and which science demonstrates to enlightened and thoughtful man. You are sure of the Infinite God, you have a right to his providence, and you can trust him in all that is to come. Fear of the devil and his noisy hell of absurd and wicked torment, you will leave to such as love the hideous thought, whom

you would but cannot cure; and in its place the certainty of ultimate heaven will come to you as the sure gift of the Infinite Father, the Infinite Mother, who is cause and providence to all the world!

When such doctrines of God, man, and the relation between them, of man's duties, rights, and destination, are set forth and accepted, what a change will follow! Speculative atheism will be stark dead; no thoughtful man will look upon the world of matter, and deny the power, law, and mind which are imminent therein; no thoughtful man will feel the world of spirit within him, but will also feel the consciousness of the perfect God, and joyous turn to him — for it is not the God of nature that the speculative atheist would deny, but only the unreal God of theologic dreams, which science turns off from, while the Deity which all the world of matter and the world of spirit alike reveal, the scientific men draw near with love greatening continually as they know him and approach.

What an effect will this natural theology have in making a real revival in natural religion! Conscious of such a nature in us, of such a God as cause and providence, of such duties, such rights, such a destination — what wealth of religious emotion will spring up within the human soul! what depth of piety, the love of God! what strength of morality, the keeping of his commands! What an influence will it have on the individual, to make him a great man, intellectual, moral, affectional, and religious; then on the family, the community, the state, the church, and the world! Then ministers and politicians will not seek to justify a well-known wrong by quoting texts from Bible, or Koran, or saint, none knows who; but out of the ex-

perience of mankind past and the consciousness of mankind present, and the actual inspiration of God now, shall both derive the unchanging higher law of truth, justice, love, and make these the statutes of mankind, till the constitution of the universe become the people's common law!

I just now spoke of the religious faculty as the strongest of all the human powers. When it works aright, what service will it render us! It is a mighty Amazon, reaching from the infinite ocean of God, far into the innermost continent of man, fed by the breath of that ocean which it tends unto. What tall mountains shall it drain; what kingdoms of water; what mills and factories of human wealth shall it turn; what fleets laden with peaceful welfare shall it bear on its bosom; what cottages, palaces, villages, towns, and mighty cities, swarming with progressive, virtuous, happy men, shall be reflected in this great river of God, which mixes their image also with the stars of heaven all the night, its varicolored glories all the day!

A false method in science gave man astrology, alchemy, magic; a true method gives him astronomy, chemistry, the medicative and beautifying arts, mills, factories, railroads, steam engines and telegraphs, ether. A false method in politics gave him a military despotism, slavery of the Asiatic millions, crushed underneath a tyrant's bloody foot; a true method gives him an industrial democracy, the marriage of liberty to law, filling the world with happy daughters and progressive sons. A true method in theology marries the religious instinct to philosophical reflection, and they will increase and multiply, replenishing the earth, and subduing it; toil and thought shall dwell

in the same household, and desire and duty go hand and hand therein.

My friends, almost thirteen years ago I came here at the request of some of you whom I see before me to-day. You asked me to preach a true method of theology, to teach the pure and absolute religion, calling no man my master, but looking to the great Master, who is also Father and Mother. It was a dark, rainy Sunday, the 16th of February, 1845.[7] I knew I was coming to a "thirty years' war," should I live so long, and I had enlisted till the fight should be over: I did not know how terrible the contest must be; you knew it still less. You remember how the churches roared at us; only here and there some one said, "Good may come out of it, as out of another Nazareth; let us wait and see. Let both grow together till the harvest; try not to pluck up these tares, lest you also disturb the wheat." Since on the 22nd of January, 1845, you voted the resolution that it was expedient that "Theodore Parker should have a chance to be heard in Boston," a great change has taken place in the theology of New England, of all the Northern States. I think the humble labors of this little society have not been in vain. It was a great opportunity which this wide hall offered, with its open doors. There are strangers who came to scoff but depart not without having learned to pray.

My main object has never been to make a system of theology, still less to form a sect, or draw a crowd; an ambitious Jesuit could better form a sect, any harlequin of the pulpit, who knew how to lay his hand on the religious instincts of men, could sooner draw a crowd. I have worked for a long time, in a long

time. I have aimed to help men and women become what God meant we should be — noble men and women, whose prayer is the communion of their soul with God's soul, whose life is a daily service of him, by the normal discipline, development, use, and enjoyment of every limb of the body and every faculty of the spirit. Do I help you to this? If not, then leave me, let these handsome walls be silent, empty, deserted, lone, till some nobler one shall come who shall waken religion in your consciousness, as that great master (pointing to the statue of Beethoven) out of the common air produced such music as enchants the world. Go you elsewhere, and find you bread from heaven in whatever desert it be rained down, and fill you with living water, no matter from what rock it flows forth, nor whose hand smites open the fountain's blessed way!

But if I so instruct your mind that it fills itself with truth and beauty, if I do rouse your conscience till it see the higher law of God's unchanging right, and if I do confirm your will till that law becomes your daily guide to life, if I do touch your affections till you better love each other — the young man more purely the maiden, and she him with purer answering love, till wife and husband, parent and child, kinsfolk, friend, and acquaintance, are knit in more welcome ties, till a larger patriotism warm you with concern for the poor, the maimed, the outcast, the slave, the drunkard, the harlot, the thief, the murderer, till a larger philanthropy join you to all mankind — and if I stir the feelings infinite till your souls are informed with the living God and have an absolute trust in him — if I help you to these grand ideas of God, of man, of the relation between them, of duty here,

and right to heaven hereafter — then am I blessed in you, and you also are blessed in me, and after the years of strife shall have passed by, you and I, though all forgot, our very names perished, shall yet be a power in the nation to soothe, and heal, and bless, long after our immortal parts shall have gone to those joys which the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart of man begun to comprehend.

## XIII

## A FALSE AND TRUE REVIVAL OF RELIGION

**But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. — MATT. ix. 36.**

Sunday before last I spoke of the false ecclesiastic idea of God, and of its insufficiency to satisfy the wants of science and of religion. Last Sunday I treated of the true philosophic idea of God, and its sufficiency to satisfy the wants of science and of religion. To-day I ask your attention to some thoughts on a false and true revival of religion. The subject is a great one — both of present and lasting importance. I cannot dispose of it in a single sermon, so to-day I shall treat mainly of the false, and show what various deeds and doctrines are set down to the name of religion, and what present methods are used for the revival of something under that name; while next Sunday I hope to speak of the true, and to show what are the real religious wants of the community to-day, and the proper way of satisfying them.

If you go to the shop of an apothecary and general druggist you find some thousand jars, vases, bottles, gallipots, drawers, and boxes, all labeled with strange technical names, which you seldom hear except from doctors, druggists, and their patients. A painful and unwholesome smell pervades the place. You feel stifled, and not quite safe. On the counter, under the show glass, you notice fearful-looking knives, forceps, pincers, and other uneasy tools of polished steel. You ask the pale, unwholesome-looking young man, who is

prematurely bald, and spectacled besides, but kindly benevolent in his face, what is in all those vessels. "O, that is medicine. It is all medicine." "But what is it good for?" "Why it is to make sick men sound, and keep well men so." "What are these things under the glass?" "They are surgical instruments, sir, to remove teeth, limbs, and help men out of the many ills that flesh is heir to." "Are they of any use?" "Of any use? Of course they are. You don't think I would sell them if they were not? Life would not be safe, sir, without these drugs and instruments." "Then," says the visitor, "I will have some medicine and tools. Put me up enough to do my business." "Yes; but we have all kinds, for this is a general druggery: we have Allopathic, Homœopathic Thompsonian, Indian, and Eclectic. There is no medicine, sir, in the four quarters of the globe that we have not got it here. What will you have?" "O, I don't care. It is all medicine — all good, you say. Give me some of the best." "But," says the thoughtful apothecary, "you must discriminate. Most of these things would kill a well man. Some are good for one disease, some for another. You must not take all the doctors' stuff in the world, because it is called medicine. Take a pinch of this and you are a dead man; a little of that, and you will be a fool all the rest of your life. That saw and tourniquet are to amputate limbs withal. I don't think you want to cut off one of your own legs, do you? You must consider what kind of medicine you need before you take any, and when you use it, do so with the greatest discretion."

Well, it is with ministers' stuff as with doctors' stuff. There is a whole shop full of deeds and doc-

trines labeled "Religion;" and when a minister, in his technical way, tells a young man or an old one, "You must have religion or you will perish everlastingly," it is much as when a doctor tells the sick man, "you must have medicine or else die." In the one case, I want to know *what* medicine; in the other, *what* religion. There is some little difference, I think, between oatmeal and strychnine, though they are both called medicine; and there is no less difference between various things called religion. One is bread — the bread of life; the other poison — the poison of death.

Look first a moment at some deeds which are called religion. (I will not go out from the Christian and Hebrew church.) I go back three or four thousand years, and I find an old man — more than seventy years old — standing by a pile of split wood, with a brand of fire beside him; he lays hold of his little son with one hand, and grasps a large crooked knife with the other. "What are you going to do with the boy, and with that knife?" I ask. "I am going to kill and then burn him on that pile of split wood as an offering to God." "What do you do that for?" "Why, it is religion. Only three days ago God said to me, 'Abraham, take thou thine only son, and offer him a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell thee of.' This is one of the grandest acts of my life. Glory to God, who demands the sacrifice of my only boy!"

Next I come down two hundred years, and I find an old man sitting still on a rough seat, out of doors, with a mob of furious men close beside him. They have just killed one of their countrymen — stoned him to death. His body lies there, life hardly extinct, the mangled flesh yet warm and quivering. "Why did

you kill this man?" I ask. And seventy elders, bearded to the girdle, exclaim at once, "Why, he picked up sticks Saturday afternoon? Would you let a man live who gathered firewood on Saturday — the seventh day — when God himself rested from his work, and was refreshed? Why, it was an act of religion to kill such a wretch. God himself told us, in good Hebrew speech, 'that man shall die the death outside the camp. The congregation shall stone him with stones.' Glory to God!"

I come down a little further, and I find a Hebrew filibuster, with an army of men more savage than the Comanche Indians. He has just conquered a territory, killed thirty-one kings, burned all their cities, killing the men, the women, and the children. He smote them with the edge of the sword. He utterly destroyed them. He left none to breathe. Temple and tower went to the ground. He butchered men by the hundred thousand. Their cities yet smoke with fire. The blackened corpses left there strew the sand; the horses they have houghed crawl around and bite the ground moistened with human blood, in the slow agonies of starvation to which they were doomed. "What is all this for?" I ask. And Joshua, the son of Nun, answers, "It is an act of religion. We have the commandment of God. He told me in Hebrew words, 'Hough the horses, destroy the towns, kill the men, kill the women, kill the children, kill the babes newly born.' These are descendants of Canaan, whom God cursed. Glory to God!" And all the filibustering army lift up their Hebrew voices and cry "Glory to God!" with one terrific shout.

Next, I make a long stride, and I find a knot of Roman soldiers surrounding a young man whom they

have nailed to a cross. His head has fallen to one side — he is just dead. It is eighteen hundred and twenty-one years ago, last Thursday. A wealthy, educated looking priest stands by, very joyful, and I ask him, "Who is this man?" And he answers, "O, he is a miserable fellow from Nazareth in Galilee. His name was Jesus. Don't you see it up there?" "Why did you kill him? Was he a murderer?" "A murderer! Murder was nothing to his crime." "Was he a kidnaper? A deceitful politician, who got office and abused it for the people's harm? Or a hypocritical priest, who thought one thing in his study, and proclaimed just the opposite in the temple?" "O no! He was an infidel. He said religion was nothing but piety and morality; or, as he called it, loving God and your neighbor as yourselves. He said man was greater than the Sabbath, more than this temple, and that religion would save a man without burning the blood of goats, and bulls, and sheep. Besides, he spoke against the priesthood — against us, and said we would compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when we had done it we had made him twice as much a child of hell as ourselves." "Was there no other way to deal with such a man?" asks the visitor. "We tried to argue him down, but it was of no use. He beat us in every argument before the accursed people, who know not the law; and the more we abused him, the more would the silly people flock after him, revere him, and love him. Why, he said we were graves that appear not, and men stumble into them; that we devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. There was no answering such things; so we scourged him half to death with rods, and then nailed him up there. We have fixed him now!"

"How did he live?" "Like the infidel he was; trusting in his own goodness and piety for salvation. He tried to teach the people to trust in their piety and in their good words. He told a most absurd story about that poor fool who fell among thieves, going from Jerusalem to Jericho; and then said that one of the priests went by — it was me he meant — and passed him on the other side. But I was in a great hurry. I had to be in Jerusalem to attend a prayer-meeting, and I could not attend to the man. Then he told a story of an old fellow who kept a tavern at Samaria — nobody ever heard of him before — jogging along on his donkey, who saw the poor fellow, and turned in there (he had nothing else to do), set him on his own beast, and took care of him. He represented that as a good act, which was pleasing to Almighty God. Then he told a story of the last judgment, that God would take into heaven those who had been kind to poor fellows on earth, and would send the other way those who had trusted in sacrifices, prayers, and the like. But he was a miserable fellow. He would have ruined the nation. Why, he told men to forgive their enemies, and to love those who hate them. It was contrary to the sacred books, Moses never did so, nor Joshua, nor Samuel, nor David. There was no such thing in all the volumes of our law." "How did he die?" "Die? He died like a dog. No whine from him. Not a word of penitence; not a tear; no confession that he was an infidel. Why, almost his last words were a miserable blaspheming prayer against us,—'Father, forgive them (he meant us), for they know not what they do.' Why, to crucify such a man was an act of religion. Look here!"— And then he lifts up his garment, and on his phylactery (a piece of parchment)

he has got the whole thirteenth chapter of the book of Deuteronomy written out. "Don't you see, it commands us to treat such a man just so! Glory to God!"

I come a little further down, and in a crowded room at Corinth, some five and twenty years after — stifling, hot, unwholesome — I find some fourscore earnest, devoted-looking men and women met together. Three or four are talking gibberish, foaming at the mouth. The room is full of jabber. One is interpreting in Greek the noise another is making in no language at all. They seem half-crazy. "What is all this?" I ask. "O," says an intellectual-looking man, sitting there as chairman of the meeting, "it is religion. These men are miraculously inspired. They speak with tongues which no man can understand except he be inspired. Sister Eunice, who lies there struck down by God, has just made a revelation in an unknown tongue, and brother Bartholomeus, with the foam on his beard, is now explaining what it means. That the world will end in a few days, and we shall be caught up to the third heavens, and shall judge angels. It is the latter days, and is the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy that young men should see visions and old men dream dreams, and God put his spirit on all. The blood of the crucified will wash all our sins away." After he has made this explanation the chairman reads a letter to the little company of men and women from a remote city, asking for new missionaries and telling that those who went a year before have been put to most excruciating tortures and to death; and he asks, "Who will go?" And there stand up twenty men and women, who say, "Send us! Let us go! for we count it all joy to suffer where our Lord and Master

suffered before." So, in spite of the fanaticism and violence that is in them, I see there is in those rude and humble people such a spirit of religion and self-sacrifice as the world had almost never seen.

I come down a little further, a hundred and twenty years later, to a town in southern France, and I find a Roman magistrate has just beheaded a whole family of Christians — sons, daughters, father, mother. Friends are just removing the dead bodies, while the aedile slaves shovel up the saw-dust, saturated with blood, and wash the foul spots clean from the pavement. "What have these people done?" I ask. And the Prætor answers, "O, they are some of the new sect of atheists called Christians. They would not worship Mars, nor offer sacrifices to Jupiter. They worshipped one Christ, who was crucified by Pontius Pilate, and who, they declare, is the actual God, and will one day judge all mankind." "But were they bad men?" "O, no, the best people in the whole town of Lyons — poor, earnest, devoted, kindly, sober people. They did no immoral act. They were the most benevolent men in the province. They left the little property they had to the poor of their company — they called it a church." "How did they die?" "They died, even the children, with the courage of a Roman soldier, but the gentleness of a Greek woman. But you know we must support the public worship of the state. We must not allow any change in religion, else we are ruined. This is an act of religion, which the gods command. Glory to the immortal gods!"

I come down still further to the same city of Lyons, to the anniversary of that same day — the day of the martyrdom of the celebrated martyrs of Lyons — and I find a body of Catholic priests and bishops, with the

help of the civil magistrates, with ecclesiastic ceremonies, psalms, prayers, and scriptures, have just tortured a young woman to death, amid the plaudits of a great crowd. They held up her baby to her before they lit the tormenting fire, and said, "Repent, and your baby shall be yours," and she said, "No, I cannot;" and they dashed its brains against the stones of the street. "What has the young mother done?" I ask. The bishops reply, "She denied the infallibility of the Pope and of the Roman church. She declared that Mary, the blessed Virgin, was not the mother of God, the blessed creator, and for such hideous blasphemy we have just burned her in the name of the holy Catholic church of Christ, on the very day of the martyrs of Lyons. It is an act of religion. Don't look astonished. Did not God command Abraham to sacrifice Isaac? Did not God command Moses to stone to death a man who picked up sticks on Saturday? Did not God command Joshua to butcher millions of Canaanites? Glory to God and his blessed mother!"

I make another step, and come a little nearer our own time — the 27th of October, 1553. I find a company of Swiss preachers and magistrates burning a Spanish doctor outside the gate of Geneva. "Has he poisoned any man?" I ask. And John Calvin — a pale thin man, with a very intellectual face, says, "Sir, he did worse than that — he denied the Trinity. He said Jesus Christ was not God. He declared that babies dying unsprinkled by a priest would not be damned everlastingly. I set the magistrates on him, and we have just burned him, in the name of God and the Protestant church of Christ. Glory be to the triune God, and to the Savior of men — the Prince of Peace!"

I come still nearer — I come down to New England. It is Tuesday, the first of June, 1660. The magistrates of Massachusetts — peaked hats on their heads, broad ruffles at their necks — have just hanged a woman on Boston common; a handsome woman, a milliner, a wife and mother also. Her dead body is swinging in the wind, hanging from one of the branches of yonder elm — standing still. "Why did you kill her?" I ask of the Rev. John Norton — a tall, gaunt, harsh-looking minister, on a white horse, with a scholar's eyes, and the face of a hangman — Geneva bands on his neck, a wig on his head,— the man who seemed more interested in the proceeding than any other one of the company. "Why did you do this?" "She was a Quaker. She said that magistrates had no right over the consciences of men; that God made revelations now as much as ever, and was just as near to George Fox as to Moses and Paul, and just as near to her as to Jesus Christ; that priests had no right to bind and loose; that we should call no man master on earth; that sprinkling water on a baby's face did it no good, and gave no pleasure to God. Besides, she said war was wicked, and that woman had just as much right as man; and when we bade her hold her peace she impudently declared that she had as good a right to publish her opinions as we had to publish ours. So we hanged her by the neck, in the name of God and of the Puritan church of New England. It is an act of religion. Glory to God, and the vine he has planted here in the wilderness!"

I come down still further. It is the same Boston — the month of March, 1858. Saturday afternoon, in a meeting-house, I find men and women met together for prayer and conference — honest-looking

men, and respectable — I meet them every day in the street. Most exciting speeches are made, exciting stories are told, exciting hymns are sung, fanatical prayers are put up. Half the assembly seem a little beside themselves, out of their understanding, more out of their conscience, still more out of their affections. One says, "The Lord is in Chicago; a great revival of religion is going on there." Anther says, "O, the Lord is in Boston; he is pouring out his spirit here." Appeals are made to fear. "Come to Christ! There is an eternal hell for you if you do not come; an eternal heaven if you will. Come to Christ! Choose now; you may never have another opportunity. 'This night thy soul shall be required of thee.'" Prayers are made for individual men, now designated by description, then by name. One obnoxious minister is singled out, and set up as a mark to be prayed at, and the petitioners riddle that target as they will. One minister asks God to convert him, and if he cannot do that, to remove him out of the way, and let his influence die with him. Another asks God to go into his study this very afternoon, and confound him, so that he shall not be able to finish the sermon — which had been writ five days before; or else meet him the next day in his pulpit, and confound him so that he shall not be able to speak. Another prays that God will put a hook into that man's jaws, so that he cannot preach. Yet another, with the spirit of commerce in him, asks God to dissuade the people from listening to this offender, and induce them to leave that house and come up and fill this.[1] I ask a grave, decent-looking, educated minister, "What is all this?" The answer is, "Why, it is an act of religion. The Lord is in Boston; he in-

spires us miraculously. He has made us all of one heart and of one mind. He hears our prayers; he gives a hearing to our petitions, he will answer our prayers, 'For the fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous man availeth much.' It is a revival of religion; it is a great revival; it goes all over the United States; even some Unitarian ministers begin to thaw, at least, to soften. The Lord is in this house to save the people. Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to men!"

One step more I take, into surroundings a little different. By the full moon-light, under yonder great elm — where Mary Dyer was hanged on the first of June, 1660, for being a Quaker — to answer his question, a young woman clasps a young man's hand — "Yes, we will be one; only I fear I am not worthy; and I have loved you so long, and you did not know it." "But I began first," says the man. And then from the two hearts, now melting into one, the prayer goes up, "All thanks to thee, Father and Mother of us both, thanks for our love. O may we be faithful in our life, and in death not divided; living a religion of piety, of holiness before thee on earth: and one also at last in heaven." Was the prayer spoken, or was it only throbbed out in their inspired hearts? I do not know, God does not care; spoken or felt, it is one to him.

The same night, in a little chamber not far off, a lone woman lays aside her work, not quite done. "I will finish that to-morrow morning, before breakfast," she says, "it will be ready five hours before the wedding, and I only promised it one hour before." She looks up at the great moon walking in beauty, and silvering her little chamber, with a great star or two

beside her — the little stars had been put to bed long before the moon was full. She thinks of the infinite soul who watches over the slumbering earth, the wakeful moon, the great stars and the little, and her own daily life. "The moon serves thee by making beauty in the night, the sun in the day, both of them heavenly bodies," quoth she, "I only an earthly body. Can I also serve by making bonnets?" And out from the great human heart, the divine soul answers, "Not less; each in its order; the sun in his, the milliner in hers." She lays her down on her bed, her limbs full of weariness, her eyes full of sleep, her heart full of trust in that God who fills the earth with his love as the moon fills her window with its beauty.

In the next house a mother has made her ready for sleep, but must have one look more to bless her eyes with the dearest sacrament which mortal ever sees. So she goes noiselessly into their room, and looks on her little ones lying there in their various sleep, and talks to herself:

"The dear Edith! how handsome she looks in her sleep! Wonder if I was ever half so fair at sixteen. And here is Willie, my first-born. What a blessing he will be when dear husband comes home from that long voyage. Tall as his father; almost through college now. We will go together and hear him at commencement. That will be a day! Here are the twin boys nestling — York and Lancaster; two little hardy roses on one stalk. Here is baby, almost twenty-eight months old — two whole years, three months and twenty-seven days old to-night. What a dear little blessed baby it is! Papa won't know little blossom when he comes home — no, he won't. Father in heaven! did I ever deserve such joy? Thou who givest

me these lives, how shall I make them worthy of thee? How shall I myself be worthy?" And the rest of her prayer — God hears it, not I.

In the next street, hard by, are two young men. "Come," says the elder, finishing his cigar, and flinging it on the pavement, "take a glass in here, and then you will have spunk enough to go with me. What a silly fool you are! Who will ever know it? You won't be young twice. There is one of the handsomest of them now at the window." Passion burns high in the young man's heart; occasion from without leagues with desire from within; there is another son of man in his temptation. But conscience, like a sweet rose, blooms over it all, and with its fragrant beauty bids passion be still. The devil steps behind. "No, I shall not go, neither to your groggery nor to your brothel — tempt me no more!" A life is saved, and integrity not stained.

Not far off a little company of men and women are assembled to consult upon the welfare of mankind. "We must end slavery; we must abolish drunkenness; we must educate the people; woman must be emancipated, and made equal with man; then prostitution will end, and many another woe. War must pass away, society be constructed anew, so that creative love shall take the place of aggressive lust and repressive fear. The family, the community, the nation, the world, must be organized on justice, not on covetousness, fraud, and violence, as now; and, above all things, the ecclesiastic idea of religion must be improved. We must have a true theology, with a just idea of God, of man, of religion; and so direct aright the strongest faculty in man. What can we do to promote all this blessed revolution? This must be our

service of God, and we must not let this generation pass away until we have mended all this. No matter what it costs us. Think what it cost our fathers, the Christian martyrs, nay, Jesus of Nazareth, to do their work! Ministers will pray against us — it will hurt nobody but themselves. Hunkers will scold — let them; we can keep our way, and our tempers beside. A few grand lives will bless this whole age, for the nations look up and ask to be guided."

The next day one of this company, a grocer in his shop, a little covetous, a little ambitious — most men are so — finds an opportunity offering itself for a profitable fraud, and he feels the temptation — all men do. He hesitates for a moment, but he answers, "No! there is an Infinite God, and I am a man, and that God's law is in me. Begone, devil!" The right is victorious.

Not far off, the same day, a poor boy in yonder divinity school writes to a friend: "There are great temptations for a young man to disown himself and bargain for place. It is the one great lure which in this age is constantly before our eyes." But he says, "Get thee behind me!" keeps the integrity of his soul, and becomes "utterly indifferent to the passing criticism that besets a young man who aims at a standard of life of his own." A life of self-denial, of noble manhood, of manly triumph spreads out before him, and girds him for the work of such a life.

See what a difference between these various examples that I have given, yet are they all called religion. Some of them spring from the very highest emotions in man; some of them spring from the meanest, the cowardliest, and the most sneaking of the passions that God has given to human nature.

What an odds in the doctrines called religion! I go to the oldest church in Boston — it is called a synagogue. There the doctrine is, "salvation by circumcision and belief in the Old Testament." The worshippers have not grown an inch since the day that somebody forged the book of Daniel. I go to the next oldest church — it is called Roman Catholic. There the doctrine is, "salvation by compliance with all the ritual of the holy Catholic church, and belief in its doctrines." I go to the Trinitarian Protestant church — the next oldest. There the doctrine is, "salvation by baptism,— either the sprinkling of drops, or plunging into a pond or tub,— and belief in an ecclesiastic theology," which, though it certainly contains great truths, is yet filled with a mass of most heinous superstition. I go away from all three to an enlightened, thoughtful man, and ask —"What doctrines, good sir, are most important to religion?" And he answers, "No doubt such as produce the manliest and most natural life: to me, the infinite perfection of God, man's fitness for his duty and his destination, immortality, the religious value of daily life. Get all the truth you can, young man; have faith in your mind, your heart, your conscience, your soul. Religion is natural, whole, human life — right feeling, right thinking, right doing, right being."

What a difference in doctrines! All the sects say, "Believe in God!" But what an odds in the God they bid you believe! One is corn, the bread of life; the other is strychnine, the poison of death. In one place God is variable, ill-natured, revengeful; he will go into a minister's study, and confound him; into a minister's pulpit, and put a hook into his jaws so that he cannot preach. That is the God of Park Street theology.

In another he is the Father and Mother of all mankind, blessing the heathen, Hebrew, Catholic, Protestant, Christian, Gentile, sinner and saint; he is to be served with a life of daily duty, the normal use of every faculty he has given.

When I hear of a revival of religion, I always ask, what do they mean to revive? What feeling, what thinking, what doing, what being? Is it a religion that shall kill a boy; that shall stone a man to death for picking up sticks Saturday afternoon; that shall butcher a nation; crucify a prophet; talk gibberish; torture a woman for her opinion, and that opinion a true one? Or is it a religion which will make me a better man, husband, brother, father, friend; a better minister, mechanic, president, street-sweeper, king — no matter what — a better man in any form?

Just now there is a "revival of religion," so called, going on in the land. The newspapers are full of it. Crowds of men and women throng the meeting-houses. They cannot get preaching enough. The poorer the article, the more they want of it. Speeches and sermons of the most extravagant character are made. Fanatical prayers are put up. Wonderful conversions are told of. The inner-most secrets of men's and women's hearts are laid bare to the eye of the gossip and the pen of the newspaper reporter. The whole is said to be a miraculous outpouring of the Holy Ghost, the direct interposition of God. You look a little more closely, and you find the whole thing has been carefully got up, with the utmost pains. Look at the motive. Ecclesiastic institutions decay in England and America. This is well known. The number of church members in the United States is quite small — only three and a quarter millions.

There are sixteen negro slaves to thirteen church members; the slaves increase, the church members do not. For two hundred years the number was never so small a fraction of the whole people. The number of births increases rapidly; the number of baptisms falls off. Belief in the ecclesiastic theology is fading out of the popular consciousness. Men begin to say, "God is not so ugly and so devilish as the ministers paint him." Hear an orthodox sermon, and then look at this, and then ask, "Is the God of the sermon, who is going to damn this whole congregation — and is in haste to do it — the God who made these flowers?" [pointing to the bouquet on the desk beside him]. Look up to the heavens. Men ask that, and they say, "The minister's God is a devilish dream. The God of nature and the God of man is no such thing."

They doubt the eternal torment of mankind. A father takes his baby in his arms, and says, "If the baby dies this moment, or if he died the day he was born, are you, Dr. Banbaby, going to make me believe God will damn this child? I shall not believe it." Men see contradictions in the Bible; the best men, the wisest, see them the most clearly. In short, New England men, who are famed for common sense, are applying to religion that common sense which wrought so well in farming, fishing, manufactures, everything else. Jealous ministers seek to change this state of things. No doubt they are as honest as lawyers, grocers, real estate holders in State Street and Summer street. They want business kept at the old stand. They have invested in ecclesiastic corporations, and wish to keep up the stock, which is badly depreciated just now.

But what will they do? They will not mend their theology — their idea of God, man, religion. They

will not manufacture an article suited to the demands of enlightened men. They cannot do it, with their ecclesiastic idea and method of making doctrines. The machinery will not do; and they say it is divine machinery, and cannot be improved. But they want to force the old article they have got on the popular market. Once they could so so; for once ministers were commonly taken from the ablest men in the country; now, well nigh from the feeblest. Once they had the best education. Once none but ministers had any considerable literary and scientific culture. Then talent and culture on the church's side could do the ecclesiastic work. Now it rarely happens that the minister is the best born man or the best bred man in his parish. In some cases there are hundreds, and in many there are ten before him. A strong woman can throw the minister in the close wrestling of debate. He cannot argue down his opponents and reason them into a belief in his terrible idea of a God who damns babies newly born. But the minister can do something else. He controls the ecclesiastic machinery, and deals directly with the religious element in man — the strongest, and perhaps also the most easily moved. So he appeals to religious fear, and tries to scare men into belief of his doctrines and membership of his church. He has no effect on great sinners, fraudulent bankers, fraudulent presidents of incorporated companies, lying governors, presidents, representatives; he has much on weak men.

Attempts at revivals are no new things — the experiment has often been tried. A few winters ago some Unitarians tried it in Boston, but they toiled all winter and caught nothing — enclosing nothing but a few sprats and minnows, who ran out through the broad

meshes of their net before it could be hauled into their boat. Other ministers, who are the wisest and the most religious part of that valuable sect, would have nothing to do with it. Different men went in, false to their idea of theology — with the best intentions, no doubt. It was a strange spectacle, that attempt to build up the ecclesiastic Unitarian pyramid in that way! It was a worse task than that of the Israelites in Egypt — not to make bricks without straw, but with nothing else! Those men, who undertook to make a hot-house of religion and force Christians under the Unitarian glass, were so cold in their religious temperament that any one of them would chill a whole garden of cucumbers in dog days. Strike two flints together and you get sparks of fire; from lumps of ice you get nothing but cold splinters. Nothing came of that. Their vanity in the beginning of winter turned into vexation of spirit in spring.

The stricter sects have often tried this experiment. It is in consistency with their theological idea. You remember the efforts made last year — the prayer meetings, conference meetings, the preaching, and the talk in the newspapers. Not much came of it. Now circumstances are different. The commercial crisis last autumn broke great fortunes to fragments, ground little ones to powder, turned men out of business by thousands.[2] Then some religious men, of all denominations, full of Christian charity, set themselves to looking after the poor. The work was well done — never better. Then to prevent the expected increase of crime, by an increased attention to justice and charity. That, too, was well done — greatly to Boston's honor. But other men would improve the opportunity to make church members, and enforce belief in the ecclesiastic

theology; so they set the revival machinery in motion. That is as well known as McCormick's reaper, and need not be described. Soon as an effect is produced in New Bedford or elsewhere, the fact is telegraphed to Boston and other places, and the spark from one fire lights a thousand more. Men like to follow the multitude. You remember the effects of the election in Pennsylvania, in October, 1856; it turned the vote of thousands of men in the Northern States.[3] If one company runs in battle, a whole regiment runs; if a regiment, then an army. Nay, a file of soldiers, with fife and drum, will gather a whole crowd of men and boys in the streets any day. All men are social, rude men gregarious. The means of getting up a revival are as well known as the means for getting up a mechanics' fair, a country muster, a cattle show, or a political convention. They have only to advertise in the newspapers, and say, "The Rev. Mr. Great-talk is to be here to-day. He is exceedingly interesting, and has already converted men by the score or the hundred." Then they hang out their placards at the corners of the streets. It is a business operation. It reminds me of the placards of the rival clothing dealers in North Street, formerly Ann; and Park Street church is the Oak Hall of the ecclesiastic business in slop clothing.[4]

There is nothing more miraculous in the one case than in the other. Last year it did not succeed very well, for business was good, and men with full pockets were not to be scared with talk about hell. Now the commercial crisis makes it easy to act on men's fears. The panic in State Street, which ruined the warehouses, fills the meeting-houses to-day. If the black death raged in New Orleans, the yellow fever in Cincinnati,

the plague in Philadelphia, the cholera in New York, the small-pox in Boston, the revival would be immensely greater than now. A Jesuit priest once said: "Seasons of pestilence are the harvest of ministers. Then men are susceptible to fear." Besides, you know what the newspapers have done. Last year the newspapers disgusted the public — the sensible part of the public — with the obscene details of a most unfortunate trial for indecent and improper conduct. This year the same newspapers are crowded with gossip about the revival. The same motive was in either case. If they could turn a penny by the revival, they did it; if by adultery, they did that. They cared not from what quarter came the clean money.

Now, we are always to expect some extravagance in the action of a force so strong as this. Some good will be done by this movement. Let us do justice. 1. There are wicked men, who are only to be roused by fear. Some will be converted. The dread of hell is stronger than fear of the gallows. Some will be scared out of their ugly vice and crime. Certainly that is a good work. But it is only the men who commit the unpopular, small vices, that are converted. Such as do the heavy wickedness, those men are never converted, until they are too old for any sin except hypocrisy. Ask Mr. Polk, ask Mr. Clay, if you can reach into the other world, and they will tell you they understood that trick as well as all others. 2. Then there are weak men who are not wicked, but who can be easily drawn into vice — gambling, drunkenness, licentiousness — some of them will be checked in their course, and become sober men, outwardly decorous. 3. Then there are unsettled men and women, who want a master to put his invasive, aggressive will

on them, and say they shall, or they shall not. They will find a master. It is true they will shrink and shrivel, and dry up. But they want a master, and finding one, they will grow no more, and be tormented no more. Ceasing to think, they will cease to doubt; and where they have made a solitude, they will call it the peace of Christ.

1. But the evil very far surpasses the good. Many men, well born, well educated, will turn off with disgust from real religion. They will become more selfish, more worldly, proud, heartless, hostile to every effort for human progress — with no faith in God, none in man, none in immortality, none in conscience — their lives devoted to the lower law. Many of them will be church members, for the actual atheist of today is cunninger than ever before, and entrenches himself within the church. There is no fortress like a pew against the ecclesiastic artillery. Such a revival will make more men of this stamp. They are the greatest obstacles to the community's progress. It is not drunkards, it is not thieves, it is not common brawlers, who most hinder the development of mankind. It is the sleek, comfortable men, outwardly decorous, but inwardly as rotten as a grave that is filled with the contents of a fever hospital.

2. Then, others who were brought into the churches full of zeal, full of resolution, they will be cursed by the theology they accept, and will be stunted in their mental, moral, affectional, and religious growth — most of all in their religious. For with the idea of God that he is an ugly devil, of man that he is a sinful worm, and of religion that it is an unnatural belief in what reason, conscience, heart, and soul cry out against, what true, manly piety can there be? Fear takes the

place of religion, and that ugly carrion crow drives off all the handsome birds of paradise, bringing the olive-branch in their beaks.

To me, in the revival itself, there is much that is encouraging. I shall speak of it next Sunday. In the conduct of it there is much profoundly melancholy. The effect of the misconduct on the people is most deplorable. What an idea of God is offered to man? Can any one love such a God? Surely not. I do not wonder men and women go mad. The idea of Christ — what blasphemy against that noble man, who said religion is love of God and love of man! What an idea of religion here, and of heaven hereafter! My friends, piety is not delirium. It does not expose to the world the innermost sanctuary of man's consciousness, and make common talk out of what is too sacred for any eye but God's, and if it turn a theater into a house of prayer it does not turn that prayer into noise and rant and theatric fun.

The effect on the morality of the people is not less bad. Honest industry, forgiveness, benevolence — these are virtues not thought of in a revival. I do not hear any prayer for temperance, any prayer for education, any prayer for the emancipation of slaves, for the elevation of women, for honesty, for industry, for brotherly love; any prayers against envy, suspicion, bigotry, superstition, spiritual pride, malice and all uncharitableness. The newspapers tell us fifty thousand are converted in a week. That is a great story, but it may be true. The revival may spread all over the land. It will make church members — not good husbands, good wives, daughters, uncles, aunts; not good shoemakers, farmers, lawyers, mechanics, merchants, laborers. It will not oppose the rum trade,

nor the trade in collies, nor the trade in African or American slaves. It will not open a school for black people south of Mason and Dixon's line. It will not break a chain, or alter a vote against the best institution in America or the world — not one. Convert the National Administration, the Supreme Court, the Senate House; nay, convert the whole administration and the democratic party to this religion, and they take a south-side view of all political wickedness. They spread slavery into Kansas; they go filibustering against Mexico, against Cuba; they restore the African slave trade. Suppose you could convert all the merchants, all the mechanics, all the laborers of Boston, and admit them to the churches that are getting up this revival, you do not add one ounce to the virtue of the city, not one cent's worth of charity to the whole town. You weaken its intelligence, its enterprise; you deaden the piety and morality of the people. The churches need a revival. No institution in America is more corrupt than her churches. No thirty thousand men and women are so bigoted and narrow as the thirty thousand ministers. The churches — they are astern of all other craft that keeps the intellectual sea. The people mean to have a revival of religion, just as the Italians and the French in their revolution meant liberty, equal rights, democracy. The people mean a revival of religion; but the ministers will turn it to a revival of the ecclesiastic theology — the doctrine of the dark ages, which we ought to have cast behind us centuries ago.

A real revival of religion — it was never more needed. Why are men and women so excited now? Why do they go to the meeting-houses, and listen to doctrines that insult the common sense of mankind?

They are not satisfied with their religious condition. They feel their want. "They are as sheep having no shepherd." This movement shows how strong is the religious faculty in man. In the name of democracy politicians use the deep, patriotic feeling of the people to destroy the best institutions of America and the world; and in the name of God ministers use this mightiest religious feeling to impose on us things yet more disastrous. Let you and me remember that religion is wholeness, not mutilation; that it is life, and not death; that it is service with every limb of this body, every faculty of this spirit; that we are not to take the world on halves with God, or on sevenths, giving him only the lesser fraction, and taking the larger ourselves, it is to spread over and consecrate the whole life, and make it divine.

Let you and me remember this. How much can we do,— a single man, a single noble woman,— with that life of natural religion! He who goes through a land and scatters blown roses may be tracked next day by their withered petals that strew the ground; but he who goes through it and scatters rose seed, a hundred years after leaves behind him a land full of fragrance and beauty for his monument, and as a heritage for his daughters and his sons. So let you and me walk through life that we shall sow the seeds of piety and of morality, to spring up fair as these blossoms at my side, and rich as the bread which is food for all the nations of mankind.

## XIV

## THE REVIVAL WE NEED

**Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.— MATT. v. 48.**

Last Sunday I said something of a false and true revival of religion. To-day I continue the same theme, asking your attention to some thoughts on the revival of religion which we *need*, and the way to bring it to pass.

In the world of man there is nothing so joyous as real natural religion. It is the centermost of all delights. Other high joys are branches, this the root they run back to, spring out of, and grow up from. I feel gratitude to many a man and woman who has helped me in my life, but to none such thankfulness as I owe my mother, my father, my sister, for the pains they took to develop this innermost of all the facts of consciousness. I cannot remember the earliest twilight of religion, when first I felt the "dayspring from on high," not even the rising of that sun which sheds such light to all my being. I trust it will not reach its noon until I have seen some four or five score years, but will rise higher, shining with more perpendicular glory until I end my mortal life. For religion grows not old. Like God, it flourishes in perpetual youth.

I too have experienced the higher joys of life; thereof not many men know better what is great in bulk, few more what is nice and exquisite in kind. Have science, letters, success, a joy to give? I know it reasonably well. Is there joy in contending with

difficulties? I have had my part. Are there pleasures of affection? I have tasted from that golden cup, and by those I love can drink vicariously at many a spring my lips directly never touch. But dear and blessed as are all these things, I count them cheap compared with my delight in God. These I could renounce and still be blessed, at least resigned; but not to know the Father and Mother of the world, to feel shut out from that causal and providential love which creates all from itself, I should go mad and die at once, or live a maimed, brutal life, and perish like a fool. But of this deep joy I cannot speak save in the most general terms. 'Tis profane to talk of such things even to most intimate friends. The handsome shapes of our innermost life are chastely veiled from all the world; there I am my own high priest, and into that holy of holies none but myself and Thou, O God! can ever come.

Does not mankind also rate its religious consciousness thus high? Whom does it honor most? Always its heroes of the soul. Men with genius for religion. Such men as Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Mahomet, they are above all human names. None else have such millions bowing thereto; none others are worshipped so as gods. How thankful we are to whoever brings religious truths! Mankind is loyal, and when it sees its king, takes him to its heart and honors him for ever. Thankful to those who helped us, with what sympathy do we look on persons trying to attain religious excellence! No romance is so attractive to us all as the story of a man longing after God and seeking rest for the soul. How do you and I, seeing such, wish to go to this child crying in the darkness, wet and numb with cold, and like a great Saint Christopher to

take him on our shoulders and thus ferry him across the stream, warming his limbs while we bear him wrapped in our mantle, and then put a candle in his lantern and bread in his pouch and bid him "God speed you, my brother! You will find day by and by."

When a great truth stirs the feelings infinite within us, how do we love to show the cause thereof to other men, and set slips from the tree of life in their gardens to make a new paradise! Worldly ambition is singular — for itself alone; the passion of love is dual — for him and her; but the affection of religion is universal-plural, embracing God and all his world within rejoicing arms. Nothing is so socializing as piety; my Father and my Mother, they are also yours.

No man is complete without the culture of the religious element; no high faculty perfect without help from that. I see great naturalists without it, great politicians, great artists; not great *men*. Nay, their special science, politics, art, is less philosophic, statesmanlike, æsthetic, for lack of this wholeness and thorough health within the man's interior. The notes of music, ground out on a hand-organ in the street, tell me if their composer had ever listened to the quiring of the birds of paradise.

There is a story — perhaps some of you never heard it — that out of Parian stone a great Christian artist in the dark ages once carved a statue of the Virgin Mary — the church's ideal woman. It was transcendent of mortality, angelic, disdainful of earth, fit only for the devotional delights of heaven, not womanly duty on earth, and sympathy with suffering and sinful men. He wrought so fair that Phidias and Praxiteles and many a heathen more who knew the wondrous art to transfigure marble into life, through

their open graves came back from heaven to look thereon; and filled with joy at this new type of womanhood, so different from the Aphrodites and Athenas, so free alike from sensual taint and oligarchic pride of intellect and power, with their cold, dumb, visionary mouths, they kissed the plastic hand which wrought the wondrous work. But Mary herself — no queenly virgin transcending earth, but pleasant Joseph's honest wife and natural mother of his boy — came also back from her heavenly transfiguration. Well pleased she looked thereon, but was not quite content, loving the natural woman of humanity, a carpenter's wife and mother to boys and girls in Nazareth, more than she loved a non-human, transcendental virgin of the church's creed, fit only for heavenly joy; and so she put a live branch of Hebrew lilies, sweet as these New England violets, wet with dew, into the statue's folded hand. Fair were they as the marble, but living flowers, which grew out of the hard black ground, and bore their seed within them, to fill the earth with future loveliness. And this piece of actual nature, surpassing the sculptor's art, so criticised his dreamy stone, that when he woke and saw it there, he felt rebuked and took the heavenly hint, and ever after fashioned his Madonnas complete women, of nobler and more actual shape — not monsters, virgins of the sky, but women, sisters, wives, mothers, for the world of time, the mortal earthly beauty kept and made more fair and human by its wholeness and its complete and perfect trust in the dear God who fashioned woman's body and inspired her soul. And as the sign that such dear divinity yet touched the common ground, he put the emblematic lilies in the statue's folded hand.

So when I see a man, else grand and beautiful, with

transcendent mind and conscience and affections too, but lacking this ultimate finish of religion, I long to plant therein the soul of piety, which shall complete the whole and so make perfect every part — mastering the world of time, but not disdaining it.

I have heard of many conversions — here is the story of a real one. A man was a drunkard, noisy, violent; he beat his wife and children, nay, his mother. Crossing yonder bridge one dark night, all at once his own conscience spoke in him — "Stop there, Richard! Drink no more!" Not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, he stopped, and swore to drink no more. He became a new man. There was a revival of religion in him — at least a part of it; ever after he had temperance, the piety of the flesh. Some of *you* understand that conversion. To speak as ministers — Jacob wrestles with the devil all night, flings him, and goes off conqueror, the devil down, and the man up for all time. Honor to conversions of this stamp!

What a joy it would be if there could come to pass a real revival of religion, of piety and morality, in the church of America — I mean among the thirty thousand Protestant ministers and the thirty hundred thousand Protestant church members — a revival of religion which should be qualitatively nice and quantitatively large — a great, new growth of the soul; such a healthy bloom of piety as would make a White-Sunday all over the land, prophetic of whole Messianic harvests of piety and morality which were to come! Why, if such a thing were to take place, and I were Governor of Massachusetts or President of the United States, though it were seed-time, or harvest-time, war-time even, I would issue my proclamation

for a day of thanksgiving and praise to the dear God who had given such gifts unto men. I would ask the people to come together in their meeting-houses, look each other in the face, take each other by the hand, embrace, and sing their psalms of praise to the Infinite Father and Mother, whose kingdom had come on earth, and was shining as the sun from east to west. I would call on great orators for choicest speech; on the poets, "blest with the vision and the faculty divine" and furnished with "the accomplishment of verse," to sing the high song and canticles of joy — the great psalm of glorifying praise to him who is power, wisdom, justice, love. Nay, I would send my ambassadors to the nations of the earth, saying, "Come and rejoice with me, for this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost, and is found." Nay, if such a movement went on in England, France, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Egypt, Arabia, Palestine, I would ask you to spare me for awhile, and would strike work to-morrow, that I might go and sacrament my eyes with the sight of the happy people that is in such a case. I would learn how that great salvation was brought about, and fetch home in my garments the Promethean seed of that fire, to kindle a flame all other this land.

Only think of it! a revival of piety, a new power of love to God, and love for all his laws, writ in the flesh and spirit, mind and conscience, heart and soul, and a consequent love of morality — the will and conscience going side by side, like Caleb and Joshua, bringing home such clusters from the promised land; an increase of intellect, power of use, power of beauty, power of truth; a great growth of economy, industry, riches; the heaven of chaste love — passion and af-

fection going hand in hand, taking sweet counsel together, and walking to the house of God in company; the growth of justice, humanity, charity. Only think of it! Forts turned into pleasure-grounds; all training-fields "converted" into public gardens; ships of war the penny-posters of the deep; arsenals changed to museums; jails become hospitals; not a gallows in America; slavery all ended — black slavery, white slavery; no murder; no theft; prostitution gone; no bestial lust anywhere, but human love for ever; poverty ended; drunkenness all banished; no staggering in the street; not an Irishman drunk — not even a member of Congress; no kidnapper between the seas; no liar in the chair of governor or broker; rulers that love the people, enacting justice; ministers teaching them the truths of nature and of human consciousness — proclaiming the real live God, who inspires men to-day, as he dresses these roses in their sweet cloth of gold. Think of a revival of religion such as that, which was bringing that about, which would do it in a hundred years or a thousand! Why, what were all the previous great triumphs of mankind to that? What were the conquests of fire, iron, the invention of ships, letters, powder, the compass, the printing press, the steam engine, telegraph, ether? What were the discovery of America, the English Revolution, the American, the French? Nay, what were these six great historic forms of religion — Brahminic, Hebraistic, Classic, Buddhistic, Christian, Mahometan — they would be what February and March are to May, July, September and October; what a few weeks of thaw are to a whole summer of flowers and an autumn full of fruit. Why, the very sympathizing sun might pause in his course and gladden his eyes; and the stars of

heaven, which have seen their image reflected back in a looking-glass of human blood, might stop and join in that primal mythic psalm, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace to all good willing men."

How much we need a real revival of religion! Not a renewal of ecclesiastic theology, but a revival of piety and morality in men's hearts.

The people *feel* this need; hence we turn off to look at all new things in religion. We are tired of that old stack of hard, dry, meadow hay, where the Christian herd has so long sought fodder, and been filled with the east wind. We long for the green pastures and sweet grass along the streams which run among the hills; hence we wish to leap over or crawl under or crowd through the bars of this old winter cowyard of the church, and at least get out of that unwholesome pen and go somewhere, with God to guide us, though we know not whither.

See the growth of Mormonism.[1] Even that has something which mankind needs; else men, and especially women, would not cross the sea three thousand miles wide, and then travel three thousand more by river or by land for its sake. The success of Mormonism is a terrible protest against the enforced celibacy of millions of marriageable women, and the worse than celibacy of so many who are called married, but are not. Fifteen years ago "Spiritualism" was two women making mysterious noises in Rochester, New York. Now it is I know not how many millions of persons, some of them thoughtful, many hungering after God. "Spiritualism"[2] had something to offer which the churches could not give. Nothing comes of nothing; every something has a cause. This very revival, foolish as is the conduct of it, selfish as are

the managers who pull the strings — with the people it indicates a profound discontent in the dull death of our churches. God created man a living soul, and he continues such only by feeding on every word which freshly proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The old bibles did for those who wrote them; the old creeds for such as believed. We want the help of the old bibles, the inspiration of the new bibles, ever proceeding from God, who freshly fills the old stars in heaven, and creates new flowers every spring on earth.

I say the people feel this need; but the need itself is greater and deeper than the popular consciousness thereof. We do not know how sick we are. Look at the chaotic state of things in America, which is but like the rest of Christendom. First, there is war. Fenced with a two-fold oceanic ditch, from two to seven thousand miles wide, we yet spend more than thirty millions of dollars every year to hire fighting men in a time of profound peace; and not one of them fixes bayonet to do mankind good.

Next consider the character of the Federal Government — it is the last place to which you would look for common honesty, for justice to our own nation; just now it is a vulture which eats the nation's vitals out; only the strong giant grows faster than this administration can tear off and swallow down. Men tell us human life is more safe in Constantinople, in Damascus, in Samarcand, in Timbuctoo, than it is in Washington. We are told that we have three murders a fortnight in the capital of the United States, all the session through. The Government is so busy filibustering against Cuba, Mexico, Central America,[8] planting slavery in Kansas, that it cannot protect the lives of its own Congressmen in its own capital.

Next look at slavery. Every seventh man is property — a negro slave; and our supreme court says colored people have no rights which we are bound to respect. The government seeks to spread this blot across the continent, from east to west, from south to north — asks five thousand new soldiers to do it with. A new state knocks at the door seeking to join the sisterhood of freedom; [4] the government says, "You shall not come in free; with bondsmen you may enter."

Fourth: look at the antagonistic character of our civilization. So much poverty in the midst of so much riches — so many idlers in so much industry. How many children in prudent, wealthy, charitable Boston, cannot go to school in winter from lack of clothes! See what fortunes are dishonestly made by men who are only the filibusters of commerce, robbers in a peaceful way! Our industry even now is a war of business — it is competition, not co-operation. How much power is lost in the friction of our social machinery. There are savages in our civilization. In the south, many of them are slaves — in the north, they are free, but still savages. A black sea of crime lashes the white houses of wealth and comfort, where science, literature, virtue, and piety together dwell.

Fifth: look at the condition of woman. There is no conscious antagonism betwixt men and women; each doubtless unconsciously aims to be more than fair to the other; but nowhere has woman her natural right. In the market, the state, the church, she is not counted the equal of man. Hence come monstrous evils — prostitution, dependence, lack of individual character, enforced celibacy, not more grateful to maid than to man, meant for neither him nor her; and hence come those marriages which are worse than celibacy itself.

These are the five great evils of mankind to-day, whence many lesser ones proceed — drunkenness, crime in its thousand forms. I do not speak to scold mankind, still less to scold America. In all respects save one, we have the best institutions in the world; and certainly, the human race had never so glorious a welfare as to-day. These evils, they were never before so small. History, it is not a retreat backwards, it is progress forth, upwards, on. These things are not a finality; they are to man's attainable condition what stumbling is to walking, stammering to speech, the boy's clumsy, mistaken scrawl to the clear current writing of the man. We are to outlearn these five evils — war, wicked government, slavery, selfish antagonism in society, the degradation of woman. We shall outgrow these things. God has given us the fittest of all possible means for attaining the end. One of the mightiest of man's helpers is this religious faculty in us; this, nothing else, can give us strength to do that work.

The business of the farmer is to organize the vegetative force of the ground, and raise thence the substances which shall feed and clothe mankind. The mechanic is to organize the force of metals, wood, fire, earth, water, lightning, air, and thereby shape the material things necessary to human needs — to feed, clothe, house, and heal mankind; corn he must turn to bread, cotton and wool to cloth, the clay, the forest, the rock, to houses; poison to medicine. The philosopher is to translate the facts of nature from matter into mind, making them into thoughts, ideas of consciousness; then to show us how to use the powers of nature for the farmer's and mechanic's work. The statesman is to organize the nation's power, its mat-

ter and its mind, its bodily force, its wealth, intelligence, justice, love, charity, religion, so that men shall live in peace together at home, with peace abroad, having security for the person, the substance of manhood, and for property, the accident of manhood; so that each shall help all, and all enjoy the special genius God gives to each.

It is the business of the minister to waken, quicken, strengthen, and guide the religious faculty, and so gain for us a great general power to help the individual man in his development of body and of spirit. But man is social. The individual alone is a wild man; it is only in society that noble individualism is instantially possible. While these five evils just named continue individual men will be as now. It is in the great social mill that men are made what they are. Here and there may be one so born that society cannot shape, bleach, or dye him. He takes no form or color, save from his mother's bosom; he has an impenetrable genius from his birth — plastic to mold others, not pliant, to be shaped or dyed. But in ninety-nine hundredths of our character most men are what society makes them. Compare Old England and New England, the children of Cove Place with the children of Beacon Street, to see the truth of this, the power of circumstances over the soul.

It is the minister's business not only to waken, strengthen, and quicken the religious power, and point to this end, but also to diffuse the ideas which shall mold society, so that it can rear noble men, with all their natural powers developed well.

The minister is the teacher of the church; not a master, a servant to teach. A normal church is a body of men assembling to promote religion, piety, and

morality. Its business is, first, protective at home — to promote piety and morality in its own members; and, second, it is diffusive abroad — to promote piety and morality in all the world according to its strength: for duty is proportionate to power to do; and where the power is little, so is the duty, where much, there great. So a church must protest against all wrong which it knows to be wrong; promote all right which it knows to be right. It is a church for that very purpose, and nothing less. The minister is to help do that work, to lead in it. He must be in advance of mankind in what pertains to religion — to all religion, individual, social. Else he cannot teach; he is no minister to work and serve, only an idler to be worked for and ministered unto.

No doubt there must be primary churches, to teach the A B C of religion, and ministers fit for that work of nursing babies; and also academic and collegiate churches, and ministers for that grand function. Let neither despise the other. So, then, the function of a real church of religion will be partly critical, to war against the wrong; partly creative, to show us the right and guide us thither, at least thither-ward.

We have thirty thousand Protestant ministers in the United States, supported at the public charge, and to do this very work, for so the people mean. They are not rich; are not rich men's sons. As a class, they have an education which is costly, even where it is not precious; which is often paid for directly by the people's work. All education is thus paid for indirectly, for in that money all human accounts are at last settled, in the great clearing-house of mankind. Work is the only coin which is current the world over. Therein do you pay for the murders which are com-

mitted at Washington, and for the angels of mercy, who in Boston carry your beneficence from house to house, and take unlawful babies newly born, and set them in religious homes, to grow up to nobleness. In that coin we pay for all things — the minister's education amongst others. The ministers come mainly from that class of people who are most affected by religious emotions and ideas, where human sympathies are the strongest. They seldom are borne by the miserably poor or the ruinously rich. They have two advantages: birth in the middle class, where they touch the ground and touch the sky; and superior culture above that class. Add to this, moreover, they commonly enter the ministry with good motives, more self-denial than self-indulgence; they are usually free from gross vices, the crimes of passion; they are the most charitable of alms-giving men; they have the best opportunities to teach the churches, and to help promote the critical and creative function which belongs thereto.

But now, alas! taken as a class, they do no such thing — they attempt none such. They do not count it their business to remove any one of those five great social evils, and so enable society to raise up noble individual men. Nay, they seldom take much pains to remove the lesser evils which have leaked out from those five great tubs of malarious poison. Let the prayers of the Protestant churches be answered to-night; let all the white men and women in the United States be converted to the ecclesiastic theology which is taught in orthodox meeting-houses; let the conversion take in all the babies who know their right hand from their left — suppose there are fifteen millions who are "brought under" and "bowed down," as they

properly call it, and made to believe in the creeds of the revival ministers; let all these be added to the church next Sunday, and take their communion of baker's bread and grocer's wine — it would not abate one of those five great evils — war, political corruption, slavery, selfish antagonism in society, nor the degradation of woman! Such a conversion is not a step towards removing any one of these evils — nay, it is a step away from that work. Such a conversion would entail inferiority on a woman; retard the progress of civilization, the moralization of mankind; add to the fetters of the slave; strengthen the tyrant's hand; increase the chances of prospective war, and add to its horrors when it broke out. For it would bless all these iniquities in the name of God, and justify them out of the Old Testament and the New — it is quite easy to do so. Nay, suppose you should convert the three millions of African slaves over ten years old, not one of them would dare thereafter to run away from his master, or strike that master down. Such conversions would unman the negro slave!

Why is all this? Two months ago I spoke of the false method of theology. The Christian church has followed that method, and while teaching many truths and doing very great service to mankind — which I should be the last to deny — it has made three monstrous errors. Here they are.

First, it has a false conception of God; its God is a devil, who means damnation.

Second, it has a false conception of man; its man is a worm, who is religiously good for nothing, the "natural man" fit only for damnation.

Third, it has a false conception of religion; its religion is to save men from hell, and it is fit only

for that. But it does not do even that for more than one out of a thousand; for the other nine hundred and ninety-nine it is absolutely good for nothing on earth or beneath it; and the one saved is not borne to heaven on mighty wings of piety and morality, fanning the thin, cold air of the world, but by the magic-miracle of the atonement, which turns off God's wrath, and carries man into eternal joy which he has done nothing to merit and to earn.

These ideas are the minister's tools to work with. I am not scolding him, only stating facts. Poor man! he is far more to be pitied than blamed. He sees a vast amount of evil in the world, and thinks it all a finality; it is God's will, and his decree that it shall last for ever. The evil cannot be removed here and now — it is the nature of things; and even in the next lift it will never be diminished to all eternity. Man cannot remove it; God will not, for he loves none but church members, who believe the church theology; he will ruin all else, and damned for once is damned for evermore.

Hence ministers in churches do not make it a principal thing to try and remove these evils, to develop man's nature, to set the religious faculty, that greatest river of God, to turn the mills of society. They aim chiefly to remove unbelief in ecclesiastical doctrines, to admit men to the church, to save their souls from the wrath of God by belief in the magic of atonement. "No man," say they, "goes into heaven for his religion, for any merit of his own; with a whole life of piety and morality, ended in the cruelest martyrdom, he cannot buy a ticket of entrance;" while a moment's belief in the ecclesiastic theology and joining of a church, will admit a pirate, a kidnaper, a deceit-

ful politician who cures a nation, or a hypocritical priest — it will admit them all to heaven — each man as a "dead-head."

Do you doubt that the churches of America count not manly religious character and life, but only theological belief, as the one thing needful? — then look at these two facts.

First, the Protestant churches of America have one great corporation — the Tract Society — wherein many sects work together. The aim is theological — to enforce ecclesiastic doctrines; it is not religious — to promote love to God, and the keeping of his natural laws writ in the very constitution of man. So the Tract Society protests against none of the great evils I have named. It attacks no popular wickedness; it would save men from the fancied wrath of God by faith in Christ; not by virtue and wisdom save them from actual ignorance, superstition, covetousness, drunkenness, dishonesty. It would save men *in* their sins hereafter, not *from* their sins to-day and here. It has little to say against war, political oppression, slavery, the antagonism of society, the degradation of woman. Even the Bible Society, in which all sects unite, dares not give the New Testament to a single slave, though the American Anti-Slavery Society offer them five thousand dollars if they will spend it thus. Spite of its profession, spite of its good intention, the church is baptized worldliness, professing the ecclesiastical theology as magical means of salvation from the future consequences of a life of wickedness below!

That is the first thing. Next, many Christian ministers think they can tease God to do what they want done; that they can get him to convert men, and if the

prayers of the churches center on one man, he presently "caves in." Now, at a revival meeting who is prayed for, prayed at, prayed against? The ecclesiastical archers do not draw their bow at a venture; it is with good aim. What Saint Sebastian is there who is stuck full of the arrows of Calvinistic imprecation? Is it the sly, corrupt politician? the "democrat" who hates democracy, but under its covert seeks to ruin the people? No; he is orthodox in profession, though atheistic in his public practice and private creed. Is it the able lawyer, who prostitutes his grand talents to bring the most miserable culprit safe from the justice of the law? No; Sunday after Sunday he sits in an orthodox meeting-house, and requires no conversion. Is it the capitalist who rents his shops for drunkeries and gambling dens, his houses for brothels? No; he is sound in the faith. Is it the merchant who trades in coolies? No; he is a church member, painted with the proper stripe. Is it the doctor of divinity who defends slavery as a divine institution? Not at all; he believes in the damnation of Unitarians, Universalists, and babies not wet with baptism; he needs no repentance. Is it the trader, whose word is good for nothing, who will always take you in? No; he is out in the street pimping for the prayer-meetings of his sects. Is it the man who sends rum and gunpowder to the negroes of Africa, and fills his ship with slaves for Cuba, half of them cast shrieking to the hungry waves before it touches land? Oh no; he contributes to the Tract Society. Do men pray for the president of the United States, that in his grand position, with his magnificent opportunities, he may secure to all men the "unalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?"— may take the golden rule

of this blessed New Testament and make that a meet-wand for the American government? They ask no such thing. Do they pray that our Supreme Court may "do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with its God?" They pray for no such men; and those they do pray for, they ask only that they may believe the creed, and "come to Christ." To Jesus of Nazareth. It does not mean to come to him who said religion was love to God and love to man! It means only, come to the catechism and the meeting-house!

I do not know how many men, and women too, have labored with me to convert me. Not one ever asked me to increase in religion, in either part of it — in piety or morality; to be more temperate, industrious, truth-telling — quite the opposite of that — more generous, just, charitable, philanthropic, forgiving to my enemies. Not one ever asked me to be a better minister, scholar, neighbor, friend, cousin, uncle, brother, husband. None ever prayed me to love God better, or to keep his commandments more, only to "come to Christ;" and their Christ, it was the catechism, which tormented me in my infancy, which I sobbed over many a night and wept myself to sleep, and at last made way with the abominable thing, trod it under my feet for ever, before I had seen my seventh birthday. I do not know how many letter-writers, clergymen, laymen, and lay-women visitors, have threatened me with eternal damnation. This one is sure I am to have it at last; these others declare it is coming "summarily." No one ever charged me with any vice, with any lack of virtue or manly excellence; only with disbelief in the catechism. That is the second thing.

These two things show that the church asks belief in the theology of unreason, not a life of natural piety and morality; and because the ministers work for this, and with tools suited to this end, is it that so many of them pass their lives

> "In dropping buckets into empty wells,
> And growing old in drawing nothing up."

These things being so, ecclesiastical revivals do no considerable good. They make superstitious church members, not religious men and women. "They heal the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly"— I mean, they do not heal it at all.

> "They skin and film the ulcerous place,
> Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
> Infects unseen."

What is the great obstacle to the liberation of France, Spain, Italy? It is the Roman church; and if every Frenchman was a member of the Roman church, and believed its creed, France might give up the ghost to-morrow — it would never be free.

What is the great obstacle to the improvement of Catholics in America? It is the Catholic church; and just in proportion as an Irishman is wedded to that church, just so do I despair of him. In a less degree our Protestant theology is working a similar harm for us.

I believe in a revival of religion. There have been several great movements thereto. Not to go out of the Hebrew and Christian church, there are several well known to all of you. That of Moses, Jesus, Luther, the Puritans, the Quakers, the Baptists, the Methodists, Unitarians, Universalists, and the Spiritualists. How

were they brought about? In each case, there was a new theologic idea by a man of genius, or a new application of an old one by a man of talent. Moses taught the people —"There is one God for the Hebrews, to be served by ritual sacrifices in one place." Jesus declared —"There is one God for all mankind, to be served by brotherly love. The walls of nationality are broke down." Luther taught —"The infallible Bible is superior to a deceitful Pope. There is freedom of conscience for all men; they are justified by faith in Christ, not by the ritual of Roman priests. Each people must manage its own church affairs." The Puritans declared —"Each church must manage its own affairs, the Bible its only law." The Baptists declared —"Grown men must be baptized all over. No man goes into heaven dry-shod; the priest must wet him from heel to crown. He that believeth and is *immersed*, shall be saved." The Quaker said —"The Holy Ghost *in* the soul is more than the letter of Scripture *out* of it. Man is free, not bound by his father's ordinances. Woman is man's equal. The prayer that God hears is in the heart; he needs no words to understand it." The Methodist said —"The Gospel is for the poor and the ignorant," and carried it thither. Unitarians and Universalists declared —"God is one, not three. He damns nobody for ever; hates nobody at all. All men shall land in heaven at last, no matter howsoever badly shipwrecked; if they sink, it is to another sea." The Spiritualists say —"The Bible is not a finality; it is no man's master, it is every man's servant. We, as well as the old prophets, can have communion with the departed. Christ reveals himself directly to us, as much as to Paul and Silas, Peter and James."

Now, in all these cases, there was a new idea; not always a true one, but one which stirred men's souls and called forth religious emotions. What energy did religious truths give the followers of Jesus! What power there was in the early Puritans, Baptists, Quakers, Methodists, mixed with folly! Of course you expect that in all religious movements. What a spread have the doctrines of Universalists and Unitarians had in eighty years! In 1778 I think there were not ten thousand men in all America who believed the distinctive doctrine of Unitarians and Universalists — the ultimate salvation of all men. Now, how wide is the doctrine spread! How rapidly Spiritualism has gone abroad! yet it has no great man in its ranks, not a philosopher, not a scholar.

When a great religious idea comes new to any man, what enthusiasm it stirs us to! The followers of Jesus did not comprehend his glorious gospel of piety and morality; they thought more of the man than of his doctrine, his life. They made him a God. "Salvation by Christ" was their creed. The idea was new; and though it was false, it was yet a great improvement over Hebraism and heathenism of that time. It made a new organization of its own, which covered all Europe with churches. But the vigorous life which once dwelt in the soil of Christendom, and threw up that ecclesiastical flora, and made those handsome shapes of stone fragrant with the beauty of devotion, it is now all gone. The fossil remains of that religious vegetation tell how mighty the life must have been. What was the state's king before the church's bishop? The Pope put his foot on the neck of emperors, for he had the religion of Christendom to back him. It is not so now, even in Europe. There is no more new

religious life in Saint Peter's church at Rome than in the pyramids of Egypt. Unburied dead men are in one, buried dead men in the other. So far as new thought is concerned the Pope is only a mummy.

We want a revival of religion in the American church which shall be to the church what the religion of Jesus was to heathenism and Judaism, which, though useful once, in his day had served out their time, and had no more that they could do. We do not want a religion hierarchically organized, which shall generate nothing but meeting-houses made of stone, and end at last in a priesthood. We want a religion democratically organized, generating great political, social, domestic institutions, and ending in a world full of noble men and women, all their faculties developed well, they serving God with that love which casts out fear.

How can we stir that element to emotions fit for such a work? Only by a theology which shall meet the people's want, a natural and just idea of man, of God, of the relation between them — of religion, life, duty, destination on earth and in heaven; a theology which has its evidences in the world of matter — all science God's testimony thereto; and in the world of consciousness — every man bearing within him the "lively oracles" the present witness of his God, his duty and destination. No sect has such a theology; no great sect aims at such, or the life it leads to. The Spiritualists are the only sect that looks forward, and has new fire on its hearth; they alone emancipate themselves from the Bible and the theology of the church, while they also seek to keep the precious truths of the Bible, and all the good things of the church. But even they — I say this modestly; they are a new sect, and everybody wars against them; my criticism I

give for their good, in the spirit of hope and tenderness — even they are rapping on coffin lids, listening for ghosts, seeking God and God's truth *beyond* human nature, not *in* human nature. Their religion is wonder more than life; not principally addressing itself to the understanding, the imagination, the reason, the conscience, the soul, but to marvelousness more than aught besides. So with many it is amazement, and not elevation. But its function is to destroy the belief in miracles; it will help set many men free from the idols of the old theologic den — no small service, even if it set up new ones of its own; because new they will be less dangerous. I also give thanks for "Spiritualism," and am not surprised at the follies and extravagances, the dishonesty of "mediums," which I partly see and partly hear of. You must always allow for casualties. You cannot transfer a people from an old theology to a new one without some breakage and other harm and loss. This is attendant on all human operations. When about to build a meeting-house in the country, of old time, all the town's people came together on a summer day for the raising. The village brawler was there, idle boys, loungers, wrestlers, boxers. There was drinking, and swearing now and then. Many got a little hot with liquor. Now and then a spike-pole got crippled, two or three straw hats "perished everlastingly." Some brother was overtaken in a fault, and carried home boozy. But they pinned down the ridgepole with shouting; all summer long the building was getting forward, the steeple grew up at last out from the tower it was rooted in; and in the autumn there was a harvest of people gathered within its walls, and generation after generation men went up there for prayers, and holy vows of noble life. Let us

always make allowance for casualties, for extravagance, in the old which is fixed, in the new which will become so. What extravagances had the Quakers once, the Christians in Paul's time!

I say we want a revival of religion such as the world has not seen, yet often longed for. It was the dream even of the Hebrew prophets, looking for the time when the nations should learn war no more, when the sword should be turned into the ploughshare, the spear to the pruning-hook, when all men should be taught of God, when "Holiness unto the Lord" should be on the bells even of the horses. We want a piety so deep that men shall understand God made man from a perfect motive, of perfect material, for a perfect purpose, and endowed with faculties which are perfect means to that end; so deep that we shall trust the natural law he writes on the body and in the soul. We want a morality so wide and firm that men shall make the constitution of the universe the common law of all mankind; every day God's day — life-time not to be let out to us at the sevenths or the seventieths, the larger fraction for wickedness, the lesser for piety and heaven, but the whole of it his, and the whole of it ours also, because we use it all as he meant it, for our good. Then the dwelling-house, the market-house, the court-house, the senate-house, the shop, the ship, the field, the forest, the mine, shall be a temple where the psalm and prayer of religion goes up from daily, normal, blessed work.

Manly, natural religion — it is not joining a church; it is not to believe a creed — Hebrew, Christian, Catholic, Protestant, Trinitarian, Unitarian, Nothingarian. It is not to keep Sunday idle; to attend meeting; to be wet with water; to read the Bible; to offer prayers

in words; to take bread and wine in the meeting-house. I know men who do all these things, and yet give scarce more evidence of piety and morality than the benches where they sit — wood resting on wood. Other men I know who do none of these things, and are yet amongst the most religious of God's children. Such things may help you — then use them in God's name, if you find it so. They may hinder — then, in God's name cast them off. Jesus of Nazareth was no Christian, in the ecclesiastical sense of that abused word; and could he come to Boston to-day, and bear the same relation to America in the nineteenth century that he did to Palestine in the first, he might not be crucified or stoned dead in the streets, because the laws forbid such outrage now; but in the "conference meeting of business men," the prayer meetings of the grimmer sects, the revivalists, men and women too, would beseech God to convert him from the wicked belief that his own religion would save his own soul, that our Father in heaven was effectually to be served by justice and love to his children; and if God could not do that they would pray —"Remove him out of the way, and let his influence *die with him.*" I say those things are not religion; helps or hindrances they may be. Religion itself is something far more inward and living. It is loving God with all your understanding and your heart and soul. It is service to God with every limb of that body, every faculty of the spirit, every power he has given you, every day of your life. That religion, it is a terror to evil-doers, yet offers them encouragement to repent; it is an inspiration to whoso would love man and love God. Suppose I am converted to such a religion; the sunlight of this idea falls on me for the first time, kindling emotions which spring

up as the green grass after April rains. What a change will it make in my landscape! Suppose I have kept a drunkery or a brothel. Then I cast off my sin and labor to restore what before I had thrown down, and in cleanness of new life make mankind and myself amends for my past wickedness.

I carry my religion into my daily work, whatever it may be. I am a street-sweeper, then my piety will come out in my faithful performance of duty. No drunkenness, profanity, obscenity, hereafter. The faces of my wife and children will be the certificate of my conversion, of my baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire. My character will be the sign that I belong to the true church of God.

I am a young school-mistress, perplexed in my business — all young people are, be their business what it may. Then my religion will appear in the discretion, in the sweetness of temper, the forbearance, with which I feed the little unruly flock, and pasture them on learning. I am president of the United States, when this thought of religion comes to me, and I change my wickedness, and seek with my vast powers to do that justice to my brother men which I wish them, with their humble ones, to do to me.

If a minister is filled with this religion, it will not let him rest. He must speak, whether men hear or whether they forbear. No fear can scare, no bribe can charm, no friends can coax him down. The church, the state, the world oppose him, all in vain. "Get thee behind me," he quietly says; and while Satan goes from this other son of man in his triumph, angels come and minister to him. He may have small talents; it matters not. The new power of his religious idea comes into him, and one such man "can chase a thou-

sand, and two ten thousand put to flight." Nay, he gets inspiration from God. He makes the axis of his little glass parallel with the axis of God, and the perpendicular Deity shines through with concentrated light and heat.

What if there were one such minister in each of the three hundred and seventy towns of this state — what a revival would they make in Massachusetts! What an increase of economy, industry, riches! What a growth of temperance, education, justice, love, in all its forms — filial, friendly, related, connubial, parental, patriotic, philanthropic love! What if all the thirty thousand Protestant ministers, and the two thousand Catholic priests in the United States had such religion — worked with such theological ideas of man, God, duty, destination! There would never be another war, staining America with blood; filibustering would be impossible; political oppression, it would not continue a week, the people would not choose a magistrate in the day time whom they must hire watchers to sit up and look after all night, lest he do mischief; a wicked ruler would be as impossible as a ghost in the day time. Slavery would end before the fourth of July, and on Independence day the mayor of the city might tell the rear admiral of the Turks, "My dear sir, we are converted, and as good as African Mahometans, and there is not a slave in all the United States. Boston has become almost as Christian as Tunis or Algiers!" What a change would come over the structure of society! Co-operative industry [5] would take the place of selfish antagonism. How would that flower of womanhood expand with fairer, sweeter, and more prophetic bloom! How would the nation's wealth increase! What education of all — what welfare now, what prog-

ress for the future! What a generation of sons and daughters would this people raise up! Ay, what missionaries should we send abroad, not to preach ignorance to the heathen, who have enough of it already, but to carry the light of the gospel of life to the nations that "sit in darkness and in the shadow of death!"

Such a revival of religion — it is possible; one day it will be actual. The ideal in my heart is a prophecy of the real in mankind's actual life. At length the best must be; this is as sure as that God is good. But this revival will not come by miracle. God does his part by creating us with faculties fit for this glorious destination; by providing us in the material world the best means to achieve that destination and get this development. To use these powers and opportunities, it is not God's work, it is yours and mine. There never was a miracle, there never will be. Trust me, what God for once makes right, he will never unmake it into wrong.

This revival of religion will not come by prayer of words, although the thirty thousand Protestant ministers and the two thousand Catholic go down on their knees together. In 1620 our Puritan fathers wished to have all New England ploughed up and made fit for farms. Suppose they had gone down on their knees and asked God to do it? Not a furrow would have been turned to-day, not a plough-share forged or cast. A few weeks ago London men wanted the Great Eastern [6] launched. What if all the English clergy, Episcopal, Dissenters, had put up prayers in the meeting-houses petitioning God to do this work, and the Queen and Parliament had knelt down on their knees in supplication, saying,—"Have mercy upon us,

O Lord! miserable offenders. There is no health in us. We beseech thee to launch her, good Lord!" They might have prayed till they were black in the face, the vessel would not stir an inch. But they used the natural means God gave them. The thinkers prayed great scientific thoughts — they prayed steam-engines and hydraulic-rams. The laborers prayed work — they prayed with levers and windlasses, and coal-fire. With sore toil the hydraulic-rams sweat through their iron skin, twelve inches thick; and the launch took place. Mind gave his right arm to matter, and Miss Leviathan, on her marriage day, coy, timid, reluctant, walked with him to the water, and they became one. Ere long they will take a whole town's population, a wealth of merchandise, and swim the Atlantic together, breast to breast, stroke after stroke, three thousand miles in a week!

Prayer, the devout helpmeet of work, is the brave man's encouragement when struggling after perfection. But prayer as a substitute for work — not a wife, to glad the toil and halve the rest, but a witch, to do by magic miracle — that is blasphemy against the true God — sterile and contemptible.

Ministers talk of a "revival of religion in answer to prayer!" It will no more come than the submarine telegraph from Europe to America. It is the effectual fervent *work* of a righteous man that availeth much — his head-work and hand-work. Gossiping before God, tattling mere words, asking him to do my duty, that is not prayer. I also believe in prayer from the innermost of my heart, else must I renounce my manhood and the Godhood above and about me. I also believe in prayer. It is the upspringing of my soul to meet the Eternal, and thereby I seek to alter

and improve myself, not Thee, O Thou Unchangeable, who art perfect from the beginning. Then I mingle my soul with the Infinite Presence. I am ashamed of my wickedness, my cowardice, sloth, fear. New strength comes into me of its own accord, as the sunlight to these flowers which open their little cups. Then I find that he that goeth forth even weeping, bearing this precious seed of prayer, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, and bring his sheaves with him!

This revival will not come all at once, as the lightning shineth from the east to the west, but as the morning comes, little by little, so will it be welcomed too. As that material day-spring from on high comes grateful to grass and trees, to men and women, so will this revival come upon our hearts, as natural consequence of such prayer and manly toil — our toilsome prayer, our prayerful toil. It will come as the agriculture of New England came — one little field made ready this year, another next — the Indian corn growing triumphant amid the black stumps of the oaken forest which the axe had hewn down and the fire had swept away, the savage looking grimly on, no longer meditating war, but yet wondering at the apples which litter the ground with the ruddy loveliness of unwonted, unexpected health. It is coming already – the peace-men, the temperance-men, anti-slavery men, educational men, the men of science, poetic men, the reform-men, men of commerce, manufacturers, agriculture — every good man, every good woman — all these are helps to it, each digging up and planting his little plot of ground. Good ministers of all denominations — Catholic, Protestant, Trinitarian, Unitarian, Methodist, Baptist, Quaker, Universalist, Spiritualist — there are thousands of them, are toiling after that

great end, even though they know it not. Many have done something, some much — one man more than any. His name is not honored in the *churches* — of course not! Was Jesus, in the Temple? They cast him out even from the synagogue. There is a scholarly man in New England gifted with such genius for literature as no other American has ever shown. He has large power of intuitive perception of the beautiful, the true, the just, the good, the holy; cultivated singularly well, having the poetic power of pictured speech, not less than the inward eye to see. His life is heroic as a soldier's; he never runs, nor hides, nor stoops, nor stands aside to avoid the shot which hits tall marks; yet is no woman gentler than this unflinching man. He was cradled in the church — it is good for a cradle, not a college, shop, or house. He was bred in the ministry, and sat at famous feet. The little town of Concord is the center of his sphere; its circumference — that great circle lies far off, hid underneath the foreign horizon of future centuries.

I honor the Chauncys, the Mayhews, the Freemans, the Buckminsters, the Channings,[7] who taught great truths, and also lived full of nobleness; I thank God for their words, which come directly, or echoed, to your heart and mine. They have gone to their reward. But no living man has done so much as Emerson to waken this religion in the great Saxon heart of the Americans and Britons. It is not doctrine he teaches — his own creed is not well defined; it is the inspiration of manliness that he imparts. He has never beguiled a man or unsuspecting maid to join a church, to underwrite another's creed, or comply with an alien ritual. But his words and his life charm earnest men with such natural religion as makes them,

of their own accord, to trust the Great Soul of all, and refine themselves into noble, normal, individual life. In six hours of so many recent weeks I think he has done more to promote the revival of piety and morality in Boston, than all the noisy rant of Calvinistic preaching, Calvinistic singing, and Calvinistic prayer in the last six months.[8]

What an opportunity there is for you and me to work in this true revival! No nation offers a field so fair. We can speak and listen, we can print and read, with none to molest or make us afraid. More than all that, we can live as high as we please. There is no government, no church, to lay its iron hands on our heads and say — "Stop there!" Misguiding ministers may believe in the damnation of babies newly born, may pray curses on us all; they cannot light a fagot to burn a man: their spirit is willing, but their flesh is weak! It is a grand age and nation to live in and work for.

The first thing that you and I want is to be religious in this sense — to know the Infinite God, who is perfect power, perfect wisdom, perfect justice, perfect holiness, and perfect love. Knowing him, you cannot fail to love with your understanding and your heart, to love his world about us, within us, and all his laws. The warmth and moisture of the ground, they come out in the grass and in the trees, in the beauty and the fragrance of these violets, in this rose which "beside his sweetness, is a cure;" and so your and my piety must blossom in our service of God with every limb of the body, every faculty of the spirit — the normal use of every power and opportunity we have, Sundays, Mondays, all time.

Then daily work shall be a gospel, life our continual

transfiguration to a nobler growth. We shall bless our town, our nation, our age, our race. When we die, we shall leave the world better because we have lived, with more welfare now, fitter for progress hereafter. We shall bear away with us the triumphant result of every trial, every duty, every effort, every tear, every prayer, every suffering, nay, of each longing aspiration after excellence. And there and then the motherly hand of God shall be reached out over us, and we shall hear the blessed word —"Come, my beloved, thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into thy Mother's joy!"

## XV

## A BUMBLEBEE'S THOUGHTS

Many centuries ago, when the beings now known to scientific men as radiata, mullusca, and vertebrata did not exist on the earth, on the twenty-first day of June, in the year one million six hundred and seventeen before our era, there was a great scientific convention of bumblebees (Apis bombax) in a little corner of a valley in the Jura mountains. I know not how the place is now called, its latitude and longitude have not been ascertained; but then it was named Blumbloonia; a great town was it and a famous. I think this was not the first convention of bumblebees, not the last; certainly there must have been many before it, probably also many after it, for such a spirit of investigation could not have been got up of a sudden, nor could it at once disappear and go down forever. Possibly such scientific meetings went on in a progressive development for many centuries. But, alas! it is of this alone that the records have come down to us; none told the tale of the others.

> Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
> Multi: sed omnes illacrymabiles
> Urgentur, ignotique, longa
> Nocte, *carent quia vate sacro!*

It is not quite easy to determine the affinity of the bumblebee language used at that meeting; yet it seems to have analogies with the Caucasian, with both the Semitic and the Indo-Germanic branches thereof; nay, some learned men have found or fancied a close re-

semblance to the dialect now in current use among German philosophers and professors, especially those of the Hegelian stripe. But I confess I have found the bumblebee style a little clearer than that of the modern professors. However, I must pass over all these philological questions, interesting and important as they are.

The meeting was conducted after much the same fashion as are congresses of the learned in these days. There were four or five hundred members, who met in general assembly, and had a celebrated bumblebee for their president; vice-presidents and secretaries abounded. There were also sections devoted to special departments of science — palæontology, entomology, zoology, physiology, geology, botany, astronomy, mathematics pure and mixed; nay, metaphysics were not neglected. Every section had its appropriate officers. These savants had their entertainments not less than their severe studies; several excursions were made to places remarkable for their beauty or their sublimity, or for some rare phenomenon of animate or inanimate nature. Rich persons, nobles, and even bumblebee princesses and queens honored the convention, sometimes by the physical presence of their distinguished personality, sometimes by inviting the naturalist to a repast upon choice flowers or on honey of delicious flavor already stored up for winter. Once the whole assembly visited the palace of the bumblebee empress — Bombacissima CXLVII.— and admired it as much as if her subjects had not built it for this long descended creature, but she had made it herself. She conferred the order of the *long sting* on the president, an honor never given to any bumblebee savant before! Patriotic and scientific songs were sung at their din-

ners, and the bumblebees were as merry over their simple food as Homer's heroes have since been over their beef, or as modern naturalists with their ice creams and their wine. To their honor be it spoken, no savant required to be helped to his place of sleep after dinner, or was left unsupported and insupportable under the table; but when night drew on they went each to his several place of repose, in a pumpkin blossom — which was the favorite resort — or under a leaf — or to some other convenient shelter. Yet I am sorry to relate that little jealousies and rivalries, heart-burnings, and the disposition to steal another's discovery prevailed at Bumbloonia in the year B. C. 1,000,617 nearly as much as they have since done with the two-legged mammals who now-a-days take their place.

On the last and great day of the meeting it was announced that by special desire the president would conclude the session with a brief speech on some matter of great importance to the interests of all science. He was the most distinguished savant in the world of bumblebees, old, famous alike for his original genius and his acquired learning; he was regarded as the sum of actual knowledge, the incarnation of all science, the future possible as well as the present actual. Besides, he would wear the splendid decoration of the order of the long sting — never seen in a scientific convention before, and be addressed as "most magnificent drone," the title of the highest nobility, members of the imperial family! His speech was waited for with obvious and yet decorous impatience. At the appointed hour the sections broke up, though without confusion, and the members crowded about him greedy of knowledge; even to have heard might one day be a distinction. He was conducted to the tip of a mullein leaf

(Verbascum Thapso-Lychnitis), while his audience below hummed and buzzed and clapped their wings and their antennæ with applause; nay, some briskly snapped their mandibles together with great and enthusiastic admiration. After order was restored, the great philosopher of the year B. C. 1,000,617 stretched out his feelers, and thus began:

Illustrious audience! It is the greatest honor of my life, already oppressed with much more than I deserve, that in my old age I am allowed to preside over this distinguished body, and still more myself to address these assembled sections before we separate. For what do I now behold? I see before me the congregated talent, learning, and even genius of all the world. Here are travelers who have skirted every zone; geologists who understand the complicated structure of the soil beneath our feet to the depth of nearly an inch; astronomers familiar with the entire heavens; botanists, zoologists, physiologists, chemists, who know all things between the earth beneath and the heavens above! philologists, understanding the origin and meaning, the whence, the wherefore, and the whither of every word in our wonderful language; and perhaps more remarkable than all else, here are metaphysicians that have analyzed all the facts of consciousness or of unconsciousness which are known or not known to the bumblebee. There was never such an assembly! Old, oppressed with the importance of my position and its solemn responsibilities, your presence overawes me! I can scarcely control my own emotions of admiration and esteem. [Great sensation.] Shall I proceed? shall I be silent? But wherefore am I here? Is it not to speak? I would fain listen, but obedient to your command, I am compelled to the more ungrateful

course. What shall I touch upon? No subject would be out of place in such an assembly, born to such diversity of talents and bread to such largeness of wisdom. But I ought to select a theme so deep and so wide that it shall be attractive to all and worthy likewise of this august occasion. So, O ye bumblebees, I shall deliver

### A BUMBLEBEE'S THOUGHTS ON THE PLAN AND PURPOSE OF THE UNIVERSE.

I separate the universe into two parts: the world of matter, wherein organization and reflection are the highest forms of activity; and the world of mind, where there are also life and thought. In the one the antithesis is only between motion and rest, growth and decay, formation and decomposition; in the other it is between life and death, progress and regress, truth and falsehood.

I. I thus dispose of the world of matter. There are four primitive substances or elements out of which all other things are made, earth, water, light, heat; these are made known to us by the senses. Some bumblebees have indeed suspected the existence of a fifth element, to which they give the name of "air." But I think its existence has never been proved, nor even shown to be probable. From the nature of the bumblebee mind it is plain there can be but four primitive and indivisible substances; for this I might appeal merely to the many distinguished metaphysicians I see before me, and the question would be settled at once by the *à priori* method. But I take another road, and appeal only to common sense. I put the question; did any of you ever see the air, ever hear it, feel it, taste it, smell it? None; no, not one! It lacks the evidence

of the senses, the only organs by which the bumble-bee holds communion with the world of matter. I know it is asked how can you then fly without "air" to support you? I answer — we fly on our wings! [Loud laughter and great applause.] Let "air" justify its existence, and I admit it; not till then.

Now, gentlemen, these elements are not thrown together without order; there is a certain ascending ratio to be noticed among them. Thus at the bottom of all is earth, the most gross, the most intractable of all, yet the basis on which all things rest. I hold this to be the oldest element, yet so imperfect is our knowledge of nature, even now, that we are not yet sure of the fact! Next is water, pliant, movable, capable of many forms, a step above earth. It is also the great nursery of life. Third comes light; and highest of all is heat. This completes the handsome scale: earth is at one end, visible, tangible, audible, palpable, odorizable, subject to any sense; heat is at the other, so delicate in its nature that it is cognizable only by a single sense. [Cheers.]

Of these four elements are all things compounded — rocks, trees, the blossom of the clover we feed upon, and that of the pumpkin we often sleep in; nay, the proud and costly magnificence of the palaces we build, and the delicious honey we therein store up for winter's use; even the curious fabric of our bodies — all is but a combination of these four elements. And, I repeat it, from the nature of things there can be no more than four elements; there can also be no less. [Sensation.]

Surely there is a plan in these things. But are they the end, the purpose of the universe! The furthest from it possible. The material world is not for

itself; it is but the basis on which another world is to rest: they are provisional for something else, not final for themselves; they have no meaning, no consciousness; still less have they any self-consciousness. Suppose the universe stopped with its material part, with these four elements and their combinations; suppose from some other and more perfect universe a bumblebee, accomplished as the members of this honorable body, should arrive — what would he say to a world of mere matter where motion, organization, growth was the highest mode of activity? I think he would at once leave it with disgust. [Cries of "Hear, hear," and "Aye, aye."]

II. Let us next look at the world of mind. Here is thought, consciousness, and in the highest departments self-consciousness — the mind that looks before and after, that knows and knows itself, conscious of its own processes of thought. The bumblebee lives, feels, thinks, and wills. On the one side indeed he is fettered by matter, and must touch the mass of the elements of which his frame is made up; but on the other he is winged with mind; there bound, here free. Is the bumblebee matter? The furthest from it possible. He is mind; mind in itself, of itself, from itself, for itself, and by itself.

Is there any order in this world of mind? At first it would seem there was none, so various are the phenomena of life, so divergent; so free is the will, and so manifold the forms of existence. Look at the animals inferior to us, which crawl on every leaf, which flutter in the light and heat of day, or which swarm in the water. Classification appears impossible, for there seems no order. But after long looking at the facts, I think I can distinguish a certain method in this mys-

terious world of life and mind. I know I am the first bumblebee who has even ventured on so bold a generalization — pardon me if I seem over-confident in my conviction, for I know that if I am in error here are hundreds who can correct me: I have studied the principle of construction in all departments of the world of mind, and I find two great classes of living things, the *Protozoa* and the *Articulata*. To the metaphysicians it would be easy to show that there must be two classes, and can be no more; for as it follows from the laws of mind that there must be four elements, no less, no more; so from these same laws does it follow that there can be but two classes of living beings. Yet I do not wish to dwell on these high and difficult matters. Let us look at these classes themselves.

1. The Protozoa. Gentlemen, these little animals are the beginning of the world of mind. Here is life; but, alas! at first it is but little elevated above mere botanic growth; I cannot tell where one begins and the other ends. Yet the highest Protozoa is infinitely superior to the highest plant — different in kind, not merely in degree; he has sensibility, has power of motion — in one word, he has mind. Such is the ineffaceable difference between the two worlds.

I class the Protozoa into three genera — the Gregarina, the Rhizopoda, the Infusoria. I know savants will differ from this division. I tremble while I announce it to those far abler than myself, yet I think it will ultimately command the respect of all the scientific bumblebees in the world. I need not dwell on the peculiarities of each genus.

Now let me ask you, are the Protozoa the purpose and final cause of the universe? Does the world of matter exist for them, and the world of mind? By no

means. Take the Gregarina: he has no definite and determinate organs; any part of him may perform the function of any other part. They have no sex; they multiply by division. What shall a bumblebee say to a race of beings whose power of propagation consists only in the ability to tear themselves to pieces? I leave them behind me, and pass to the next grand division of the world of mind.

2. The Articulata. Here begins the true life of mind, and here the difference between the two worlds is most clearly seen. Yet the lowest Articulata are but a little above the highest Protozoa; it is a thread, not a chasm, which separates the two — a thread loosely drawn. I pass over the inferior genera of Articulata: I come at once to the highest of all, the Bumblebee.

Gentlemen, consider our constitution. Look at our body. What an admirable thorax, so barrel-shaped and so strong. Consider the arch of the breast, of the back; it is the perfection of mechanic art. How impenetrable is our armor to the terrible weapons of our foes; then, too, how beautiful is it all! Look at the abdomen, a congeries of rings well-fitted together. How strong it is, and yet so flexible. In the lower orders of Articulata the abdomen is long drawn out, trailing on the ground a hideous sight. With us it is compact, condensed to the smallest possible compass. Gentlemen, I notice this in passing, that the grade of elevation in the scale of being is always inversely as the length of the abdomen. With us it is reduced to the minimum, plainly intimating that we have attained the maximum of mental grandeur! Think of these legs — three on either side; how strong they are, how admirably divided into several parts, connected with the most beautiful joints. Is there on earth a fairer

sight than the well-crooked leg of the bumblebee? No, gentlemen, there is none; such is my judgment, not my prejudice. [Continued cheering.] How nicely it is fitted for walking on the plants which feed us! Look, then, at our feelers, at our mandibles, at our eyes, with many facets. Consider the wings on which we fly more freely than the water runs — for while that has its definite course on every leaf, we turn and wander at our own sweet will. How powerful is our sting. The Protozoa has no limbs, but

"Every part can every part supply,"

while we have a definite and unalterable figure, which is the resultant of strength and beauty. We have organs for catching and holding, for walking and flying; we can therewith burrow in the ground, wherein we build our wonderful habitations, which are the perfection of architecture. Armed front and rear, we can defend ourselves against our foes with mandible and sting. What organs of digestion are we furnished with! with what exquisite chemistry do we change the crude juices of the plants into the most delicious honey. Thus we feed on the most ethereal portion of the flowers, which are the transcendental portion of the plants. [Loud cheers.]

The Protozoa has no sex; the bumblebee has three — the male, the female, the neuter. We exhaust the categories of sexuality; the three are actual, a fourth is not possible, not conceivable. How prolific we are! Then, too, all grossness is removed from our connubial activity; it is not a hideous young bumblebee that is born naked into the world; but the produce of our love in a little round delicate egg — in due time it develops

itself into a most lovely maggot, and finally is transfigured into the complete and perfect bumblebee!

2. How far more wonderful is the bumblebee mind. What wonderful faculties of sensation, of reflection, of imagination, of analysis and synthesis! Alone of all animals we reason from effect to cause, from cause to effect. There is consciousness below us, I doubt not — though dim and feeble. But self-consciousness is our glorious monopoly! It is only the bumblebee that can lay his feeler on his proboscis and say *I am a* ME. Even the slimiest worm lives, but we know that we live, and say, "I think, and so I know I am." Oh glorious attribute reserved for bumblebees! We are the sole possessors of science. To the inferior animals (I will not call them creatures, for that implies a theory, while I adhere only to the fixed facts of philosophy [immense applause]); to the inferior animals metaphysics are unknown, they know, but do not know they know; on the widest heath there is no worm, nor bug, no philosophic mite who ever thinks about his thinking! There is no logic in the crickets' senseless noise. Poetry alone is ours, and in the sublime chants of our immortal bards all nature is mirrored back again, and made more fair by passing through the bumblebee consciousness. [Tremendous applause.] But there is another department of superior consciousness which is also peculiar to us — it is a science and an art — I mean politics. Our assemblies are not a brute congeries of life, like the heaps of caterpillars, it is a well-policied state. How majestic is the presence of our queen, her wisdom how infinite. [Tremendous applause, long continued.] I need not speak of the princesses so beautiful, as soon as they break forth from the brittle shell that guards their charmed life! [Renewed applause.]

What wonderful learning have we heaped up. Our thought is the standard-measure of the world of things. The great world of matter and of mind lies there outside of us — and we are a little world. No, gentlemen, it is we that are the great world. Unconscious matter, and mind not self-conscious, is only the microcosm, it is the bumblebee consciousness that is the true macrocosm, the real great world. [Great sensation.]

But why seek to show the wonderful powers of our intellect and our vast superiority over all external things, when the proof of it is before me in the glorious personalities who represent every excellence actual, possible, or conceivable?

3. Look at the relation between us and the world of matter. It seems to exist only for our use. Here I will mention but a single fact, and from that you can easily judge of all, for it is a crucial fact, a guide-board instance, that indicates the road which nature travels on. The red clover grows abundantly all over the world; in its deep cup there lies hid the most delicious honey, the nectar of the world. But that cup is so deep no other insect can reach the sweet treasure at the bottom; even the common honey-bee, who stands next below us in the scale of being, must pass it by — longed for, but not touched! Yet our proboscis is so constructed that with ease we suck this exquisite provision which nature furnishes solely for us! [Cheers and applause.]

Now, gentlemen, it is plain that WE are the crown of the universe; we stand on the top of the world, all things are for us. I say it with calm deliberation, and also with most emphatic certainty: the bumblebee is the purpose of the universe! [Tremendous applause.] Yes, gentlemen, the plan of the universe in-

tends the bumblebee as its end and final cause. Without him the world would be as unmeaning as a flower with no honey in its breast. As I look over the long line of causes and effects which compose the universe; as I thence dissolve away the material part thereof, and look at the idea, the meaning and ultimate purpose, I see all things point to the bumblebee as the perfection of finite being; I had almost said of all being. He alone is the principal, the finality; all else is but provisional. He alone is his own excuse for being; his existence is the reason why he is here; but all other things are only that he may be, their excuse for existence is only this — that they prepare for him, provide for him, and shelter him. Some things do this directly, some in a circuitous manner, but though they serve other purposes, yet their end is to serve him. For him is the world of matter and its four elements with their manifold forces, static and dynamic too: for him its curious combinations, which make up the world of organization and vegetation: all is but material basis for him!

For him, too, is the world of mind, with its two divisions of animated life, its Protozoa and its Articulata. Here the lower orders are all subservient, ancillary, not existing for their own sake, but only that they may serve him. They are the slope on which he climbs up to existence and enjoyment. The effort of the universe has been to produce the bumblebee! So was it at the beginning, so has it ever been; so is it now, so must it ever be. Yet how many million years before she could make real her own idea, and the highest possibility of mind became a settled fact — a bumblebee!

What a difference between us and the highest Infu-

soria! The two seem hardly to belong to the same world. How much vaster the odds between us and the inorganic matter, the primeval atoms of the world. Yet even from that to us there has been no leap; the continuity of being is never broken. Step by step went on the mighty work. It seemed, indeed, to have no meaning, there was only a chaos of organization and decomposition, attraction and repulsion, growth and decay, life and death, progress and regress. But at length the end is reached, the idea shines through the more material fact. One evening the sun went down on a world without a meaning; the next morning it rose, and behold there were bumblebees; the chaos of transient night has become the kosmos of eternal day! [Immense sensation, prolonged applause.] Shall I say the bumblebee was created? No, gentlemen, that were to adduce a mere theory. That he came as the resultant of all the forces there or heretofore active in the universe? No more is this to be allowed in such an assembly! The bumblebee is mind, mind in himself, for himself, of himself, by himself. So he exists of his own accord, his being is his will, he exists because he wills to be. Perhaps I might say that all things anterior to him were but an efflux from him. For with a being so vast as the bumblebee's the effect may well precede the cause, and the non-existent bumblebee project out of himself all actual existence! [Renewed applause.]

Such, gentlemen, is the purpose of the world — the bumblebee. Such is its plan — to prepare for, to provide for, to develop him. Here ends the function of the all of things. The world of matter can no further go: no more the world of mind; there can be no progress beyond us; no order of beings above us, dif-

ferent in their plan of structure. Look at the great facts. There are but two divisions of the universe — the world of matter and the world of mind. From the nature of things there can be no more. So there are and there can be only two orders of living beings, the Protozoa, without permanent definiteness of form, and without distinct organs; and the Articulata, with permanent organs and definite form. Here can be no new animals with a different plan of structure. The possibility of matter and of mind is exhausted in us. I repeat it, gentlemen, though there may be more Protozoa, more Articulata, yet there can never be a new form of animated being. The Articulata sums up and finishes the world. The choice of being is complete in us; the last sublimation of matter, that is our body; the last elevation of mind, that is ourselves, our essence. The next step would be the absolute, the infinite; nay, who shall dare declare that we are not ourselves the absolute, the infinite! [Sensation.]

Gentlemen, do not think it irreverent in me to set limits thus to the powers of the universe [Cries of "No! no!"], for we are the standard of existence, the norm of all being. Our measure was taken before the world began; all fits us, and corresponds to our stature. My antenna is the unit-measure of all space, my thought of all time. Nay, time and space are but conditions of my body and my mind; they have no existence independent of us! My eye controls the light, my tongue is the standard of sweetness. The bumblebee consciousness is at once the measure and the limit of all that has been, is, or ever shall be. The possibilities of mind and matter are exhausted in the universe and its plan and its purpose on the bumblebee. [Great sensation and applause.]

But, gentlemen, there is one faculty of our multiform consciousness I have not named as yet, though I think it the greatest of all; I mean the power of criticism, the act to praise, the act to reprehend. Let me apply this highest faculty of the bumblebee to the universe itself, for that is the proper object of our criticism. For a Protozoa to criticise the universe it were ridiculous; so would it be for a light-winged butterfly, for a grasshopper, for a cricket, or even the largest beetle. But for us, gentlemen, the universe lies below the level of the bumblebee consciousness; we look down thereon, and pass judgment. I will make some criticisms on the universe, and also on some of its parts.

Do not think me presumptuous in standing forth as the representative of bumblebeedom in this matter. I have peculiar advantages. I have attained great and almost unexampled age. I have buzzed four summers; I have dozed as many winters through; the number of my years equals that of my legs and antennæ on one side, and still my eye is not dim nor my natural vigor abated. This fact gives me an advantage over all our short-lived race. My time has been devoted to science, " all summer in the field, all winter in my cell " — this has been my motto all my life. I have traveled wide, and seen the entire world. Starting from this, my ancestral spot, I made expeditions east, west, north, and south. I traveled four entire days in each direction, stopped only at the limits of the world. I have been up to the top of the highest fir-tree (abies pectinata), yes, have flown over it, and touched the sky. I have been deeper down in the earth than any bumblebee, ten times my own length,— it makes me shudder to think of it, and then I touched the bottom of the monstrous world. I have lived in familiarity with all

the philosophers now on earth, and have gathered all that time has left of the great thinkers before me. I am well acquainted with the summits of bumblebee consciousness in times past and present. If any bumblebee may criticise, surely I am that one. And if I am judge of anything it is of the universe itself, for I have studied it all my life; if I know anything, or can know anything, it is the all of things — the world of matter and the world of mind; this then is my judgment. [Sensation.]

Of the universe in general — the all of things considered as a whole — I say I like it, and give it my emphatic approval. I admire its plan, I comprehend its wisdom, and rejoice in it — it is kindred to our own. So much for the whole universe — its plan is good, its purpose excellent, and realized in us. However, it is not so large as we have commonly supposed, nor so wonderful! But, gentlemen, when I come to speak of its parts, I confess I have my reserves; I cannot approve of all things in it — hear me in some details.

I like the nature and constitution of the bumblebee, it is admirable, all strength. I give it my entire approval, nothing is to be added there,— infancy, how fair it is! the egg, the maggot that beautifully crawls out thence into the purple light of day! How noble its maturity! such strength in the neuters, such activity in the females, such laziness in the drones! Here comes old age, "the years that bring the philosophic mind!" Gentlemen, the old bumblebee is the handsomest thing in the world! I find no fault with our nature. But there are defects in our relation to the material world.

1. Too much time was consumed in preparing for

our race. Why not accomplish it at once, or in a short space, instead of waiting all that tedious delay of the long periods indicated by the great convulsions of geology? Certainly there was a fault somewhere. Is it in the pause of thought or of execution! Alas, I know not. Was it perhaps that the production of the bumblebee taxed the universe to the utmost, and what she gained in power she must needs lose in time? It may be so. Still I repeat it, there was a weakness, a fault somewhere. The bumblebee might have existed twenty million years before he did, and all that time was lost!

2. I find fault, also with the proportion of the seasons; the summers are too short, the winters are too long and cold. The first frosts come too early and too abruptly. Do we not feel it so, especially when we arrive at our best years — a ripe old age.

3. The trees are too tall, such, I mean, as bear the most valuable flowers, like the elm, the maple, the linden, and the honey-locust. Why must the bumblebee fly for his daily food to such an exceeding height?

4. The conditions of life are too difficult. Why does not honey run all day in any place, or fall each night like dew? Why must we build our houses, and not find them built? Why wage inevitable war with mandibles and stings against unequal foes? Why does the moth, insensible to stings, devour the honey we lay up, and lodge with every comb we make? Why is so much of our time consumed in these mean evils, which are only for this vile body; and why is there so little left for science and for criticism of the universe?

Yes, gentlemen, I confess it. This is a hard world to live in! 'Tis needlessly hard! This fact gives a melancholy tinge to all our literature!

5. Our life is too short; commonly its years do not exceed the number of legs on one side of our body; now and then it is lengthened by a simple antenna more. It should last as many years as there are legs and feelers on both sides. Then were our life decent and respectable.

Such, gentlemen, is the universe, such its parts, such its purpose and its plan. Such also its defects; and such the proud pre-eminence of the bumblebee, who not only is its crown and its completion, but can enjoy and comprehend it all; nay, can look beyond and see its faults, and find a serene but melancholy pleasure in thinking that it might be better made! Shall we complain of our lot, at the head of each department of nature, master of two worlds? It were unworthy of the bumblebee. Let us be proud, because we are so great, and so be greater that we are so proud. Of this, dear friends, be sure. No order of beings can ever come superior to us, formed after a different structural plan; we are, and we shall ever be, the end of the universe, its final cause; all things are made for us alone.

Gentlemen, I shall not long hold out; the frost of death will soon stiffen even my stalwart limbs. You will forget me for some greater one, and I shall not complain; as I succeeded so shall I be succeeded. But this shall be my last and greatest wish — may the race of philosophic bumblebees continue for ever; their criticism of the universe, may it never cease.

With great applause the assembly welcomed these words; there was a prodigious humming, buzzing, clapping of legs and feelers and mandibles, and rustling of wings, then they flew to a clump of clover, and fed their fill, then went to sleep, and the next day went home.

# NOTES

# NOTES

## I

### TRANSIENT AND PERMANENT IN CHRISTIANITY

When Theodore Parker preached this sermon he was a country minister unknown to the general public. It became at once the subject of controversy, and gave him a wider hearing. It was published soon after its delivery, with the following title-page: A Discourse on the Transient and Permanent in Christianity; Preached at the ordination of Mr. Charles C. Shackford, in the Hawes Place Church in Boston, May 19, 1841. By Theodore Parker, Minister of the Second Church in Roxbury. Boston, printed by the Author, 1841. It was introduced to the public by the following

#### PREFACE

This Discourse is now printed in consequence of some incorrect rumors and printed statements respecting its contents. I have made a few verbal alterations, changed the order of a few sentences, omitted here and there a few words which were only repetitions of former sentences, and added a few paragraphs, which, though written in the manuscript, were necessarily omitted in consequence of the length of the discourse. But I have changed nothing in the substance or doctrine, and have made the alterations only to set the doctrines in a clearer and stronger light. The diffuse and somewhat rhetorical style, though less adapted to reading than hearing, I could not change without exciting a suspicion of falseness. With the above exceptions, the discourse is printed just as it was delivered.

It is not necessary I should remark upon the article relating to this discourse, signed by several clergymen,

and so industriously circulated by the religious journals. The thing speaks for itself. Others, likewise, I find, have lifted up their heel against this discourse, or the rumor of it. I was not so vain as to expect my humble attempts to make a distinction between religion and theology, or to deliver Christianity from heathen and Jewish notions, would be either accepted or understood by all; nor yet am I so young as to be surprised at the cry of "Infidel and Blasphemer," which has been successively raised against nearly all defenders of the religion of Jesus, from Origen to Ralph Cudworth.

West Roxbury, June 17, 1841.

A slip of errata was printed and pasted into some of the copies of this first edition, which also gives a passage inadvertently omitted in copying the sermon for the press. This edition was an 8vo of 48 pages. A second edition was soon called for, which was reset with smaller type, pages 31 to 39 being devoted to a complete list of the changes made in preparing the first edition. Parker prefixed the following:

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The first edition of this discourse was exhausted in a few days, and I have thought proper to reprint it. I have added an appendix, which contains the "various readings" collected from a comparison of the printed discourse with the manuscript sermon as it was preached at South Boston. The reader may thus see the discourse just as it was delivered.

West Roxbury, July 6th, 1841.

Such was the interest in this sermon, that a third edition was issued in 1841 by B. H. Greene and E. P. Peabody, from the same type as the second edition. It appeared with this

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

The demand for this sermon still continuing in the community, we have taken leave from Mr. Parker to print a third edition. On mature deliberation we have concluded, with his concurrence, not to republish the Appendix of the second edition. One reason is, that it not only is unsightly, but unnecessary; an examination of it showing that the "various readings" do not change even a shade of thought. The corrections, it is obvious, are, as Mr. Parker deemed them, merely verbal; such as any scholar would unavoidably make in copying manuscript for the press. Seven hundred and fifty of that edition are now in the community, and this is sufficient for the curiosity of the captious.

We requested Mr. Parker to write a preface to this edition; but he replied that as no argument had been adduced against any idea he had advanced, he had nothing to say in addition to the discourse, beside the first preface.

B. H. G.
E. P. P.

Succeeding these three pamphlet 8vo editions of this sermon, which appeared in 1841, it was republished in "The Critical and Miscellaneous Writings of Theodore Parker," which appeared in 1843. It was included by Miss Cobbe in the eighth volume of her edition, entitled "Miscellaneous Discourses."

A very lively controversy followed the delivery of this sermon. Full accounts of the attacks upon Parker and his defense, with much of the correspondence, can be found in the standard biographies of Parker. See Chadwick's Theodore Parker 96–104. Frothingham's Theodore Parker, 152–159. Weiss' Life, vol. 1, p. 169–172.

At a subsequent date, probably for the "Critical

and Miscellaneous Writings" of 1843, Parker brought together many of the comments on his sermon, with the plan of including them in an appendix. This purpose was abandoned, but the manuscript remains.

The correspondence published in the newspapers, together with many of the editorial comments on the controversy, were published in an 8vo. pamphlet of 64 pages bearing this title: The South-Boston Unitarian Ordination. Boston, published by Saxton & Pierce, 1841. Another product of the controversy was a 40-page 8vo pamphlet with this title-page: A Review of Mr. Parker's Discourse on the Transient and Permanent in Christianity. By O. A. Brownson. From the Boston Quarterly Review. Boston, Benjamin H. Greene, 1841.

Charles Chauncy Shackford, at whose ordination this sermon was preached, graduated at Harvard in 1835, but his name does not appear as a student at the Divinity School. After several years service over the church in South Boston, he was settled over the Unitarian church in Lynn. From there he went to Cornell University, where he was professor of rhetoric and literature. For a period he lived in Cambridge, where he died in December, 1891. A volume of his "Social and Literary Papers" was published in Boston, 1892.

## II

### THE RELATION OF JESUS TO HIS AGE

This sermon was preached at the Thursday lecture, in December, 1844, and was printed the following month. The title-page was as follows: The Relation of Jesus to his Age and the Ages. A Sermon preached at the Thursday Lecture, in Boston, December 26, 1844, by Theodore Parker, Minister of the Second Church in Roxbury. Boston, Charles C.

Little and James Brown, MDCCCXLV. This pamphlet was an 8vo of 18 pages.

Parker had preached his South Boston sermon, his teachings had been discussed by the Boston Association of Ministers, of which he was a member, the "Discourse of Matters Pertaining to Religion" had been published, and he had become well known as a man who had something to say worth hearing. The scene at the delivery of this sermon has been vividly described by O. B. Frothingham, in his Life of Parker, 213–215. See also Weiss' Life I, 248–251, and Chadwick's Theodore Parker, 143, 144.

## III

### THE RELATION OF THE BIBLE TO THE SOUL

In date of composition this sermon was the earliest written by Parker to appear in print, though in time of publication it succeeded that on "The Divine Presence in Nature and the Soul," which appeared in the first number of "The Dial." It was first preached at West Roxbury, April 21, 1839, in the afternoon. It was published in "The Western Messenger," Louisville, Ky., then edited by James Freeman Clarke, for December, 1840, and January, 1841. It has never before been reprinted.

## IV

### THE CHRISTIANITY OF CHRIST

This sermon was first preached at West Roxbury, June 28, 1840, in the afternoon, and a week later at Dedham. It was also preached in Boston and Salem three or four times in the succeeding months. It was printed in the second number of "The Dial," October, 1840. It bore the title, "A Lesson for the Day; or, The Christianity of Christ, of the Church, and of

Society." The text was from Revelations iii, 1. It appeared as the first piece in the volume of "Critical and Miscellaneous Writings," published in 1843; and was included in Miss Cobbe's edition, volume nine, "Critical Writings," volume one.

## V

### THE PHARISEES

This sermon was first preached for George Ripley in the Purchase-street Church, Boston, in the forenoon of January 24, 1841, and in the afternoon of the following Sunday at West Roxbury. It was printed in "The Dial" for July, 1841; and again in the "Critical and Miscellaneous Writings," 1843. It appeared in Miss Cobbe's edition, ninth volume, "Critical Writings," volume one.

## VI

### PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY

This sermon was preached for Rev. John Turner Sargent, in the Suffolk-street Chapel in Boston, evening of December 26, 1841. Parker's book of sermon records does not indicate that it was preached in West Roxbury or on any other occasion than the one mentioned. On that day Parker preached morning, afternoon and evening for Mr. Sargent, who probably occupied the West Roxbury pulpit. It was printed in "The Dial" for January, 1842, and was reprinted in "The Critical and Miscellaneous Writings," 1843. Miss Cobbe included it in her ninth volume, "Critical Writings," volume one.

The incidents of this exchange with Mr. Sargent and its consequences are fully described in Weiss' Life I, 253, and Frothingham's Theodore Parker, 212–213.

Mr. Sargent was a minister-at-large among the poor in Boston, working under the direction of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, a man of the highest character and large usefulness. At a later period Mr. Sargent came into some degree of prominence in connection with the Chestnut-street Club, which was held at his house, and at that of Rev. C. A. Bartol. See "Sketches and Reminiscences of the Radical Club of Chestnut Street, Boston. Edited by Mrs. John T. Sargent. Boston, James R. Osgood, 1880."

## VII

### THOUGHTS ON THEOLOGY

This review of Dorner's work on the "Person of Christ" appeared in "The Dial" for April, 1842. It was the concluding piece in "The Critical and Miscellaneous Writings" of 1843. It appeared in Miss Cobbe's ninth volume, "Critical Writings," volume one.

*Page 133, note 1.* Victor Cousin, French educator and eclectic philosopher, 1792–1867. He translated Plato, edited Maine de Biran, Abelard, Proclus, and Descartes, and lectured on philosophy. He published "Philosophical Fragments," "Lectures on the True, and Beautiful, and the Good," "Course of Modern Philosophy," and "Justice and Charity." As professor at the Sorbonne, and minister of public instruction, he had a wide-reaching influence on education, as a popularizer of philosophy, and as a guide to the higher phases of the national life. John Veitch gives this estimate of his philosophy: "He has left no distinctive principle of philosophy which is likely to be permanent. But he has left very interesting psychological analyses, and several new, just, and true expositions of philosophical systems, especially that of Locke and the philosophers of Scotland. He was at

the same time a man of impressive power, of rare and wide culture, and of lofty aims,— far above priestly conception and Philistine narrowness. He was familiar with the broad lines of nearly every system of philosophy, ancient and modern. His eclecticism was the proof of a reverential sympathy with the struggles of human thought to attain to certainty in the highest problems of speculation. It was eminently a doctrine of comprehension and of toleration." It was Cousin's tendency to idealism, and his breadth of sympathy, which led Parker to admire him.

*Page 135, note 2.* Philosophy is here used in the old sense as identical with science, and was usually called natural philosophy.

*Page 135, note 3.* Maternus Julius Firmicus was a Latin writer of the fourth century. There may have been two persons of this name or two persons confounded under the one name. An advocate of Sicily, writing on mathematics and astrology, produced in 354 a book entitled *Mathesas libri VIII.* This work was not completed, but was mainly devoted to nativities, influence of the stars on human destiny, and other astrological subjects. Neo-platonic in spirit, this work was opposed to Christianity. It was published by Aldus Minutius in 1501. About the same time was written *Essaribus Profanarum Religionum,* dedicated to Constantius and Constans, and now exists in manuscript in the Vatican library. It was published in Strasburg in 1562. It is a vigorous defense of Christianity against paganism. The wide divergences in opinion between these two books, though they are both attributed to Firmicus, have led critics to the conclusion that they could not have been written by the same person. It is evidently from the latter work that Parker quotes.

*Page 136, note 4.* Anticyra was a town in Phocis, on the Corinthian Gulf, noted in ancient Greece for

the production of hellebore. On this account it was frequented by those suffering from mental diseases.

*Page 136, note 5.* See the work referred to at the end of this paragraph, and named in the foot-note.

*Page 140, note 6.* The first work to set forth the mythical origin of the books of the Bible, or the narratives contained in them, was that of Herman Samuel Reimarus, 1694–1768, some of whose writings were published by Lessing in 1777 as the "Wolfenbüttel Fragments." In these ideas Lessing shared to a large extent. The New Testament was first dealt with in this spirit by Friedrich Davis Strauss, 1808–1874, in his "Life of Jesus," which was published in 1834–5. His position was more fully defined in his "Christliche Glaubenslehre," 1840–1. A sane and able treatment of mythology in the Bible will be found in Percy Gardner's "Exploratio Evangelica," the chapters on "Idea and Myth," and "The Outgrowth of Myth."

*Page 144, note 7.* This cannot be accepted as a just estimate of Comte's philosophy. He was positivist, not a materialist. His ethical system emphasized humanitarianism, not selfishness. It is probable Parker was not familiar with Comte's writings. He dealt more liberally with Buckle, whose theories he did not accept; but estimated kindly, if critically.

*Page 145, note 8.* Francis Hare, 1671–1740, was bishop of Chichester. He was chaplain to Queen Anne, dean of Worcester, later of St. Paul's. He wrote much, edited some of the classics, was in frequent controversies, and was described as of "a sharp and piercing wit, of great judgment and understanding, and of a sour and crabbed disposition." He published a tract in 1714 on the difficulties and discouragements which attend the study of the Scriptures in the way of private judgment, which was censured by convocation. It was understood to be ironical, and left

doubt as to whether he intended to defend Samuel Clarke and Whiston or if he implied that their vagaries made an appeal to authority necessary.

*Page 145, note 9.* Henry Brougham, 1778–1868, was an English statesman, scientist, and man of letters. He was Lord High Chancellor, a leader in Parliament, and intimately connected with the passage of the reform bill of 1832. A man of great popularity and versatility, he wrote on many subjects, and was as ready to expound theology as politics. His scholarship was inaccurate, but his theology was sound, according to the accepted standards. He edited Paley's "Natural Theology," and accepted the opinions of that work. It was this antiquated conception of the world that provoked Parker's contempt.

*Page 146, note 10.* The "Bridgewater Treatises" were originated by Rev. Francis Henry, eighth earl of Bridgewater, 1758–1829. In his will he placed £8000 at the disposal of the president of the Royal Society, to be used for the writing and publication of a treatise or treatises "on the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as manifested in the creation." Gilbert Davis, then president of the society, selected eight persons, to each of whom he paid £1000 for a work in conformity with the purposes of the legacy. These works were published as "The Bridgewater Treatises," and attracted much attention. The first was published in 1833, and the whole series was as follows: 1. The Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral and Intellectual Condition of Man, by Rev. Thomas Chalmers, D.D. 2. The Adaptation of External Nature to the Physical Condition of Man, by John Kidd, M.D. 3. Astronomy and General Physics considered with reference to Natural Theology, by Rev. William Whewell, D.D. 4. The Hand, its Mechanism and Vital Endowments as evincing Design, by Sir Charles Bell. 5. Animal and Vegetable Physiology considered

with reference to Natural Theology, by Peter Mark Roget. 6. Geology and Mineralogy considered with reference to Natural Theology, by Rev. William Buckland, D.D. 7. The Habits and Instincts of Animals with reference to Natural Theology, by Rev. William Kirby. 8. Chemistry, Meteorology, and the Function of Digestion considered with reference to Natural Theology, by William Prout, M.D. These works followed the teleological method of investigation, expanded the conceptions of Paley, but added little to the effectiveness of his reasoning. They are almost wholly forgotten now, so largely has modern science and evolution done away with the conclusions which they reached. The dignity of great names added nothing to Parker's admiration for these works, nor caused him to hesitate in the rejection of their method, though he followed it himself too often, to the undoing of his conclusions.

*Page 146, note 11.* John Henry Newman began "Tracts for the Times" in September, 1833, and they were continued until 1841. They were published in London by Rivington, and extended to five volumes. They were issued, as the prospectus stated, for the purpose of "contributing something towards the practical revival of doctrines [such as apostolical succession, holy Catholic church, confession] which, although held by the great divines of our church [Church of England], have become practically obsolete with the majority of our members." Newman was aided by Keoble, Pusey, and other members of Oxford University. Pusey wrote on "Scriptural Views of Holy Baptism," "Holy Eucharist," and kindred topics. The most famous of these tracts was "No. 90," written by Newman. It was a plea for Catholicism and for a larger acceptance of the church as authoritative. It showed that Newman and Pusey were moving towards the Roman Church; and was

met with a storm of controversy and protest. These tracts voiced the High Church movement in its earlier phases; and gave it formal expression, and intellectual interpretation. This has been called the Oxford, Tractarian, and High Church movement; and it aimed at a return to Catholicism in all things but the acceptance of the authority of the Pope.

*Page 148, note 12.*. George Campbell, 1719–1796, English theologian and Biblical critic, was settled as a clergyman at Aberdeen and elsewhere. In 1759 he became principal of Marischal College in the University of that city, and in 1771 professor of theology. His "Dissertation on Miracles" appeared in 1763, and was followed by his "Principles of Rhetoric" in 1776. In 1778 was published his "New Translation of the Gospels," with critical notes. The work to which Parker refers is his "Lectures on Ecclesiastical History," published after Campbell's death.

*Page 149, note 13.* Isaac August Dorner, 1809–1884, one of the leading German theologians in the nineteenth century, was professor of theology at several German universities in succession, going to Berlin in 1862. His most distinctive work was his "History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ," first published in 1839. He also wrote a "History of Protestant Theology," 1867; "System of Christian Doctrine," 1879; and "System of Christian Ethics," 1885. He was strongly evangelical, and vigorously opposed to rationalism.

*Page 157, note 14.* Since Parker's day this subject has had extensive investigation in the works of Spencer, Tylor, Lang, Frazer, and others. These scholars find that religion was first expressed in animism, then in totemism, ancestor-worship, and the deification of the powers of nature. The veneration of ancestors leads to their deification and worship. This is followed by that of living kings, heroes and other

leaders, because they represent the ancestors or act in place of the higher powers. In "Religions of Primitive Peoples," Daniel G. Brinton says: "That when the brute was at times invested with the aureole of the divine, man himself should at times partake of its glory, need be expected. But here let an important distinction be drawn. Never as man was he clothed in the attributes of deity, but just in so far as he was deemed to be more than man. The Latin saying, deus homini deus, never was true anywhere in its literal sense. Anthropism never existed in any religion. Man or the likeness of man was never worshipped by reason of any human attribute, but solely for those believed to be more than human, superhuman. The tribes of Polynesia did adore their chieftains; the ancient Egyptians and many another people did pay their rulers divine honor, and rank them among the gods; but always because they considered them partakers of the divine nature, sharers in that which is ever beyond humanity."

*Page 163, note 15.* The "Library of Useful Knowledge" was published by the Society established for the diffusion of Useful Knowledge, London. Its publications were issued in parts, at 6d each. They included Bacon's "Novum Organum," Bell's "Animal Mechanics," Bushe's "British Husbandry," De Morgan's "Calculus," Müller's "History of Greek Literature," Vaughan's "England under the Stuarts," and other similar works.

*Page 163, note 16.* Theologia Germanica, Deutsche Theologia, German Theology, was written by a mystic before the reformation, associated with the Friends of of God or Brethren of the Common Life, and probably more or less intimately associated with Tauler, Suso, and Ruysbroek. William Ralph Inge, in his "Christian Mysticism," says: "The little book called German Theology, by an unknown author, belongs to

the school of Eckhart. It is one of the most precious treasures of devotional literature. In some ways it is superior to the famous treatise of à Kempis, 'On the Imitation of Christ,' since the self-centered individualism is less prominent. His teaching is closely in accordance with that of Tauler. It is the crowning achievement of Christian mysticism before the reformation." Ullman, in his "Reformers before the Reformation," adds: "All that German mysticism had hitherto, with the aid of fancy and poetry, produced, and in simple and affecting diction made level to the people, the unknown but profound author of the little treatise, which bears the name of 'Deutsche Theologia,' at a somewhat advanced period, speculatively digested in order to form, as a counterpart to scholasticism, and more distinctly than had hitherto been done, a system of sacred doctrines of his own, level to all capacities, and based on good scriptural and logical grounds." This book was edited and published by Luther in 1516.

## VIII

### THE EXCELLENCE OF GOODNESS

Parker preached this sermon at West Roxbury on the morning of November 10, 1844; and for James Freeman Clarke, at the Church of the Disciples, on the morning of January 26, 1845. Owing to the discussion it awakened, it was at once published in a 16-page, large 12mo pamphlet, with the title: The Excellence of Goodness. A Sermon preached in the Church of the Disciples, in Boston, on Sunday, January 26, 1845. By Theodore Parker, Minister of the Second Church in Roxbury. Published by request. Boston, Benjamin H. Greene, MDCCCXLV. It was included by Miss Cobbe in her ninth volume, "Critical Writings," volume one.

In his diary Parker wrote: "Jan. 17, 1845. Two members of J. F. Clarke's Society came here this afternoon to state to me that in the Church of the Disciples there was a strong feeling about my exchanging with their minister. They came with the kindest intentions to notify me of the fact — to state, furthermore, that some of the society would abandon the Church if I came. But I think the principle in virtue of which Clarke asked an exchange is true. I feel inclined to live out this principle."

In his diary Clarke wrote: "January 26, 1845. Black Sunday. T. Parker preached morning and evening. I went to West Roxbury to preach." The sermon preached by Parker in the evening was on Christian Advancement, and has never been printed.

The incidents of this exchange are described in Chadwick's Theodore Parker, 144, 145 and in Frothingham's Theodore Parker, 215, 216.

## IX

### THE CHRISTIAN USE OF SUNDAY

An 8vo pamphlet of 51 pages, the sermon was prefaced by the scripture readings from Exodus, Numbers, and Matthew. The title-page was as follows: Some Thoughts of the Most Christian Use of the Sunday: A Sermon preached at the Melodeon, on Sunday, Jan. 30th, by Theodore Parker, minister of the xxviii Congregational Church in Boston; and now published by request. Boston, B. H. Greene, 124 Washington Street, 1848.

This sermon was reprinted in the "Speeches, Addresses, and Occasional Sermons of Theodore Parker," volume two, 1852. It was included by Miss Cobbe in her third volume, "Discourses of Theology."

The occasion for this sermon was the agitation begun in 1847 by William Lloyd Garrison against the

excessive Sabbatarianism of the time, and the laws in most of the states which punished those who did not conform to a narrow interpretation of them. A call was issued for an anti-Sabbath convention to meet in Boston on March 23 and 24, 1848. In writing to Garrison under date of January 9, Parker said: "I heartily subscribe my name to the call for the convention which you speak of. But I don't think I shall be able to take any prominent part in the discussions at that convention. Still, I will do what I can. Sometimes I have thought that hitherto, amid the fiercer this-worldliness of New England, nothing but superstition would keep [the people] (in their present low state) from perverting the Sunday yet worse by making all their time devoted to Mammon. But there is 'a better time a-coming,' and God bless you in all attempts to bring it now."

A large proportion of those interested in this movement were anti-slavery workers, but others joined with them. The convention was well attended, and its proceedings were fully reported in a pamphlet, as well as in the newspapers. Parker made an extended speech, largly reiterating the opinions expressed in the sermon; and this speech was printed in full in the pamphlet. He offered a series of resolutions, but they were rejected; and those presented by Garrison were accepted. In his diary Parker made these entries in regard to the sessions of the convention:

"March 23. The Anti-Sabbath convention assembled to-day. It was a more respectable-looking body of men than I expected to see together. Mr. Garrison's call was read, and sounded well. His resolutions were thorough, but had some of the infelicities which have always been distasteful to me.

"24th. Garrison's resolutions passed. I voted against some, for some, and was silent upon others. My own lie on the table; for after so much objection

was made to them by Lucretia Mott, Garrison, Foster, and Pillsbury, I thought it not worth while to disturb the convention with such matters."

Strange as it may seem, Parker's resolutions were too conservative for the convention. His veneration for the old sanctities of religion withheld him from the extremest opinions on such a practical problem. They were as follows:

"1. That it is not our design to weaken the moral considerations or arguments which lead Christians to devote Sunday to worship, and efforts to promote their growth in religion.

"2. That we learn from history, from observation, and all our experience, that the custom of devoting one day in the week to the special work of spiritual culture has produced very happy results.

"3. That we desire to remove such obstacles as now hinder men from the most Christian use of the first day in the week.

"4. That we consider the superstitious opinons respecting the origin of the institution of the Sunday, as a day to be devoted to religious purposes, to form the chief obstacle in the way of a yet more profitable use of that day.

"5. That we should lament to see the Sunday devoted to labor or to sport; for, though we think all days are equally holy, we yet consider that the custom of devoting one day in the week mainly to spiritual culture is still of great advantage to mankind.

"6. That, as Christians and as men, we lament and protest against all attempts of governments to tyrannize over the consciences of men."

Weiss says that Parker's speech was "remarkable for its common-sense," and he gives this extract from it:

"Men commonly think they are never clear of one wrong till they have got the opposite wrong. So

the Puritans, disgusted with the frivolity which they saw in the Romish Church — disappointed at finding in the Catholic Sunday, in its freedom and its frolic, so little for the direct nurture of religion — went over to the other extreme. That was a time of fanatical reaction against old abuses. There is no great danger of resisting a wrong too powerfully, but there is great danger of going over to the opposite wrong, and contending that that wrong is the right. I would not commit the same fault that the Puritans did, and go to the opposite extreme. If men are fanatical in their notion of keeping the Sunday, I would not be a fanatic and destroy it; for, if men now are driven by the spirit of reaction against the Puritanic idea of the Sunday, and go to the opposite extreme, why, all the work must be done over again till it is well done."

*Page 189, note 1.* "The sole and distinct issue that we make is this [were the words of the call]: We maintain that the seventh-day Sabbath was exclusively Jewish in its origin and design; that no holiness, in any sense, attaches to the first day of the week, more than to any other; and that the attempt to compel the observance of any day as 'the Sabbath,' especially by penal enactments, is unauthorized by Scripture or reason, and a shameful act of imposture and tyranny. We claim for ourselves, and for all mankind, the right to worship God according to the dictates of our own consciences. This right, inherent and inalienable, is cloven down in the United States; and we call upon all who desire to preserve civil and religious liberty to rally for its rescue."

*Page 214, note 2.* In the first series of tracts of the American Unitarian Association, no. 55, the Rev. Samuel Barrett, of Boston, wrote of "The Apostle Peter a Unitarian." "In a word, he seems," we are told, "almost without exception, when making mention of our Savior, to use language with that sort of cau-

tion, which we might imagine an intelligent and thorough Unitarian would employ, who was apprehensive that his writings would some time be searched for Trinitarian proof-texts."

## X

### THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS

This article was printed in the "Massachusetts Quarterly Review" for September, 1850. On the front cover of this, the twelfth number, it was entitled: "Different Christologies of the New Testament." The article itself, the fifth in that number, was headed as "Some Thoughts on the different opinions in the New Testament relative to the Personality of Jesus." It was included by Miss Cobbe in her tenth volume, "Critical Writings," second volume.

In a letter written to Samuel J. May, in November, 1846, Parker gives definite expression to his conception of Jesus. "I think Jesus was a perfect man — perfect in morality and religion. A religious genius, as Homer a poetical genius. I can't say there never will be a greater man in morality and religion, though I can conceive of none now. Who knows what is possible for man? If Jesus had lived now, I think he would have been greater; yes, if he had lived to be forty, fifty, sixty, or seventy years old — why not? I think him human, not superhuman — the manliest of men. I think him inspired directly, but not miraculously; not unnaturally, but naturally — inspired in proportion to his genius and his use thereof. I think God is immanent in man; yes, in men — most in the greatest, truest, best men. How much of the excellence of Jesus came from organization, I don't know. Artists are true to nature, it seems to me, and give him an organization exquisitely human — noble, intellectual, and heavenly. But I have seen no full

embodiment of the Christ in art — none of my Christ, though enough of the Church's Christ. I doubt not, that as men follow the laws of nature, we shall have nobler forms, features, heads, and so nobler men. We have loved force hitherto, and bred draught cattle — men for war. May we not one day have a man with the philosophic genius of a Socrates, the poetic of a Homer, the practical of a Napoleon, and the religious of a Christ?"

## XI

### A TEACHER OF RELIGION

After the preaching of the sermon at the ordination of Rev. Charles C. Shackford, in 1841, Parker was not called to a similar service until 1855. Then he preached at Barre, in the western part of Worcester county, Massachusetts, the ordination sermon of Marshall Gunnison Kemball. [The name is so spelled in the "General Catalogue of the Divinity School of Harvard University," 1898.] The sermon was at once printed in an 8vo pamphlet of 56 pages, with the title: A Discourse of the Function of a Teacher of Religion in these times, preached at the ordination of Moses G. Kimball as Minister of the Free Church at Barre, Worcester County, Mass., on Wednesday, June 13, 1855. By Theodore Parker, Minister of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society in Boston. Boston, Benjamin H. Greene, 1855. It was included by Miss Cobbe in her third volume, "Discourses of Theology."

Kemball was born at Warner, N. H., in 1826, graduated at the Divinity School in 1854, and remained at Barre until 1861. He was settled over Unitarian churches at Madison, Wis., 1866–1869; and Sheboygan, Wis., 1870–1875. He then conducted a private school at Sheboygan until 1882, when he became an

examiner in the Pension Bureau, Washington, where he died in 1904. His sympathy with Parker's theological beliefs is indicated in the fact that the charge to the pastor was by John Pierpont, and the right hand of fellowship by Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

In writing of Kemball and other young Unitarian preachers who became "Parkerites," J. W. Chadwick says, in his biography of Parker: "Parker's interest was very great in those men who were imbued with his liberal spirit and were engaged in religious enterprises of more or less independent character. Upon his list, 'pretty good for a beginning,' he counted 'Johnson at Lynn, Higginson at Worcester, Kemball at Barre, Longfellow at Brooklyn, Frothingham at Jersey City, May at Syracuse, Mayo at Albany, and William H. Fish in Tompkins County [New York].'"

## XII

### FALSE AND TRUE THEOLOGY

The panic of 1857 gave incentive to the great revival of 1857–58, and its excesses led to the preaching of this sermon. It was reported in one of the daily newspapers, this report was revised by Parker, and it appeared in a 15-page, 8vo, pamphlet, with this title-page: False and True Theology. A Sermon delivered at the Music Hall, Boston, on Sunday, February 14, 1858, by Theodore Parker, Minister of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society. Revised by the Author. Boston, William L. Kent and Co., 1858. It was included by Miss Cobbe in her third volume, "Discourses of Theology."

In the "Life and Correspondence," John Weiss describes some of the results which followed the preaching of this discourse (vol. II, 249–252).

*Page 275, note 1.* These statements seem very antiquated in view of the evolutionary conceptions of the re-

lations of the animals to man. The descent theory not only hypothetically, but practically, indicates their falsity. The view now generally accepted is clearly stated by Principal C. Lloyd Morgan, in "Habit and Instinct," one of the best works on the subject. He shows clearly that instinct is not infallible, that animals do make mistakes, and must profit by experience. "We find," he says on page 131, "that they rapidly improve in accuracy, and soon have all the appearance of being under guidance and control, so that they may be modified or checked according to the nature of the object, nice or nasty, as the case may be. Now, we may safely lay down this canon: that which is outside experience can afford no data for the conscious guidance of future behavior. . . . Hence we seem forced to reject the hypothesis of unconscious automatism on the grounds that the activities in question do afford data to experience, can be modified, and are therefore subject to voluntary control, by giving rise to sensations and feelings which enter into the conscious life of the chick."

*Page 275, note 2.* Morgan shows that birds and mammals, as well as lower animals, do constantly learn by experience, and that there is formed among them a body of tradition or socially transmitted results of experience. "In such organisms and young mammals," he says on page 136, "instincts are to be regarded as the automatic raw material which will be shaped under the guidance of consciousness into what may be called instinct-habits, if by this compound term we may understand activities founded on a congenital instinctive basis, but modified by acquired experience."

*Page 282, note 3.* Lawrence and Stone were prominent commission merchants in Boston, and known to all who heard Parker. The firm was afterwards Mason and Lawrence.

*Page 282, note 4.* A Congregational Council at North Woburn refused to ordain a young man who did not believe in eternal torments for the wicked. See note in the volume of this edition of Parker's works, entitled "The World of Matter and the Spirit of Man."

*Page 283, note 5.* Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach, 1804–1872, was a disciple of Hegel, and indirectly one of the founders of modern socialism. He published in 1841 "The Essence of Christianity," translated by George Eliot; and "The Essence of Religion," 1849. In these works he interprets all religious beliefs as subjective in their nature, having no corresponding objective reality; in a word, as the expression of the desires of man. God is nature as man feels and relives it in his own emotional and intellectual life. Christ is man's ideal of his own being. The work on Christianity was widely translated and had a powerful influence on some minds. Writing to Dr. John Rouge, of London, in May, 1854, Parker said of Feuerbach: "I am glad to find that you do not follow the lead of Feuerbach or of his coadjutors. He does a service, but it is purely the destruction of the old, and then he roots up the wheat along with the tares. There are some Germans who accept him as their Coryphæus — atheistic men whose creed is — 'There is no God, Feuerbach is his prophet; a body but no soul; a here but no hereafter; a world and no God.' They are much to be pitied — for the superstition of the church, with despotism of the state, has forced their noble natures into this sad conclusion."

*Page 286, note 6.* The Synod of Dort declared: "That there is an election and reprobation of infants no less than of adults we cannot deny in the face of God, who hates unborn children." The Westminster Confession says that infants not elected "cannot be saved." Dr. William Twiss, of the Westminster As-

sembly, said that "many infants depart from this life in original sin, and consequently are condemned to eternal death." See "The Doom of the Majority of Mankind," by Samuel J. Barrows, Boston, 1883. Mr. Barrows does not quote the statement to which Parker refers, but it is one that has been frequently referred to as having been used in the early part of the nineteenth century.

*Page 289, note 7.* Frothingham gives an interesting account of the beginnings of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society in Boston, that to which Parker preached. "A commodious hall was obtained — the Melodeon. It occupied the ground now covered by the Boston Theater [1873]; and on Feb. 16 — a cold, wintry day, the air thick with bitter rain, the streets full of snow — the ministry in Boston was begun, with much misgiving on his part, with sanguine expectation on the part of his friends. . . . Mr. Parker's arrangement with his Boston friends contemplated a Sunday-morning service at the Melodeon for a year; the pulpit at West Roxbury being temporarily filled by substitutes, he still having his residence there, and maintaining pastoral relations with the people. The Boston preaching was regarded as an experiment; but it was so prosperous, that before the year elapsed, a permanent settlement was decided on and effected. On the 13th of December, 1845, an invitation from the Boston Society to become their minister was accepted. On the 3rd of January, 1846, the position at West Roxbury was resigned in a tenderly-worded letter, and the new relation taken up. Signal success had attended the preaching at the Melodeon. The hall was filled every Sunday morning with earnest listeners, humble people in the main, but intelligent, eager, determined. They flocked together, individual men and women, from the four corners of the ecclesiastical world; some from the 'outer darkness' of the world non-ecclesiastical."

## XIII

### A REVIVAL OF RELIGION

Frothingham says in his "Life," that as a sign of the times the revival of 1857–58 made Parker sad, "and stirred up within him the theological zeal which never had wholly slept, but which had temporarily yielded to a more practical enthusiasm of humanity. The two sermons, 'A False and True Revival of Religion,' and 'The Revival of Religion which we Need,' showed the old fires still burning, their heat as fierce, their splendor as awful, their beauty as fascinating as ever,— fires of wrath, and flames of prophecy, at once angering some, and kindling others with hope."

The first of these sermons was an 8vo, 12-page pamphlet, without cover, as was the case with all three of these revival sermons, as printed for popular circulation. The title-page took this form: A False and True Revival of Religion. A Sermon, delivered at Music Hall, Boston, on Sunday, April 4, 1858, by Theodore Parker. Phonographically reported by James M. W. Yerrington. Boston, published by William L. Kent & Co., 1858. On page 2 appeared this announcement:

"Note from the Publisher.— Mr. Parker stated previous to his discourse that the subject under consideration would be treated in two sermons. The first (the present) on A False Revival, and the second on A True Revival. The second discourse, which is immediately connected with the present, will be published on Tuesday, April 13th."

In a letter of April 24, to the Hon. John P. Hale, Parker wrote of the popular demand for these sermons: "I am glad you like my revival sermons. They sold 10,000 in ten days, and the demand still continues. They were stereotyped in forty-eight hours

after they were preached; but they struck off 5000 copies before they stopped the press to stereotype the matter. I have another I will send you in a day or two, preached two months ago."

*Page 301, note 1.* This refers to the utterances at a prayer-meeting in Park Street Church, where the Almighty was beseeched to silence Parker. One orthodox preacher said in a sermon: "Hell never vomited forth a more wicked and blasphemous monster than Theodore Parker; and it is only the mercies of Jesus Christ which have kept him from eternal damnation already." On the other hand, John Weiss justly says of these sermons, that "they are an answer to prayer worth considering. They overflow with the health of unsparing criticism, pure morality, and tender devoutness. They are filled full with the elements which promote a revival of conscience and piety in the hearts of men, fertile as the

"— happy lands that have luxurious names."

Their offense was in their absolute, unvarnished truth-telling concerning the condition of the church and the country. Their picture of the beautiful purification of America, which a true revival would promote, has the crushing satire of common-sense, unstintedly spoken, to show what hideous evils are never touched and cured by the agitation of evangelical sentiment."

*Page 308, note 2.* In his "History of the American People," Woodrow Wilson says of the financial crisis of 1857 what may be regarded as a very moderate estimate of the situation, vol. 4, page 174: "Widespread financial distress clouded the winter following the presidential election [of 1856], and filled all the year 1857 with its deep disquietude, now sharp and touched with panic, now a slow, dull lethargy in which merchants and manufacturers and transportation companies and bankers merely waited and did not hope.

The sudden growth of enterprise and commerce which had followed the rapid extension of railways and the establishment of steam navigation upon the seas, to which the discovery of gold in California had given added stimulation, and which every item of the steady growth of industry and of the nation itself had assisted to keep in heart these ten years, had inevitably bred mere speculation, tempted men to unsound ventures, added excitement to confidence, hairbrained scheming to the sober making of plans, and credit had at last been overstrained and wrecked by dishonesty, miscalculation, and flat failure."

*Page 308, note 3.* The presidential election of 1856 was influenced by the state elections held in August, then a dozen in number. Especially influential were those of October, in which Ohio went Republican, but Indiana and Pennsylvania Democratic. In November, at the national election, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Indiana, and Illinois cast their votes for the candidate of the Democratic party, thus assuring the election of Buchanan. Schouler says, in his "History of the United States," vol. 5, page 357, that "Pennsylvania alone would have reversed the national result against the united phalanx of the solid south."

*Page 309, note 4.* Oak Hall was a building in the old business district of Boston for many years devoted to the sale of clothing. As a clothing-house it was famous for more than a quarter of a century after this sermon was preached.

## XIV

### THE REVIVAL WE NEED

On the Sunday following the delivery of the preceding sermon Parker continued the subject with the present one, which was immediately printed with the following title-page: The Revival of Religion which

we Need. A Sermon delivered at Music Hall, Boston, on Sunday, April 11, 1858, by Theodore Parker, Minister of the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society. Phonographically reported by James M. W. Yerrington. Boston, published by W. L. Kent & Co., 1858. It was included by Miss Cobbe in her third volume, "Discourses of Theology."

*Page 318, note 1.* In 1858 Mormonism was at the height of its aggressiveness, defying the United States army in Utah, turning out governors and judges, refusing to recognize the national government in any form, and inciting to the Mountain Meadow massacre. Moreover, it was growing rapidly in the number of its adherents, not only in Utah, but in many parts of the world. The best book on the subject is that by J. W. Riley, "The Founder of Mormonism," New York, 1902. An able work in defense of Mormonism is that by N. L. Nelson, "Scientific Aspects of Mormonism," New York, 1904.

*Page 319, note 2.* August 8, 1857, Parker wrote to Prof. Edward Desor, of Neuchâtel: "Spiritualism is doing two good things. 1. It knocks the nonsense of the popular theology to pieces, and so does us a negative service. 2. It leads cold, hard, materialistic men to a recognition of what is really spiritual in their nature, and so does a positive good. But there is a world of humbug, nonsense, and fraud mixed up with it." At about the same time he preached a sermon on the subject, reported in the newspapers, in which he took the same positions.

*Page 319, note 3.* During the ten years succeeding the war with Mexico frequent attempts were made to annex Cuba, and other countries to the south, to the territory of the United States. These attempts grew out of the desire of the southern states to increase the area of slave-holding states.

*Page 320, note 4.* Minnesota was admitted into the

Union of states by act of Congress passed May 4, 1858, under a constitution accepted by the people of that territory, in October, 1857.

*Page 334, note 5.* This statement, as well as many others in Parker's sermons, indicate that he was friendly to the idea of industrial co-operation, perhaps both productive and distributive. He did not join Brook Farm, and was not actively connected with the Associationist movement of that period; but essentially he shared in these attempts at social reformation. Writing in his journal, about 1840, he said: "I have lived long enough to see the shams of things, and to look them fairly in the face. 1. The state is a bundle of shams. It is based on force, not love. It is still feudal. A Christian state is an anomaly, like a square circle. Our laws degrade, at the beginning, one-half of the human race, and sacrifice them to the other and perhaps worse half. Our prisons are institutions that make more criminals than they mend; seventeen-twentieths of crimes are against property, which shows that something is wrong in the state of property. Society causes crime, and then hangs the criminals. 2. The church is still worse. It is a colossal lie. It is based on the letter of the Bible and the notion of its plenary inspiration." Again, in writing of a book which had proposed communism, he said:

"Property must show why it shall not be abated. Labor must show why it should exempt so many from its burdens, and crush others therewith. It is, no doubt, a good thing that I should read the Greek Anthology, and cultivate myself in my leisure, as a musk-melon ripens in the sun; but why should I be the only one of the thousand who has this chance? True, I have won it dearly, laboriously, but others of better ability with less hardihood fail in the attempt, and serve me with the body. It makes me groan to look

into the evils of society; when will there be an end? I thank God I am not born to set the matter right. I scarce dare attempt a reform of theology, but I shall be in for the whole, and must condemn the state and society no less than the church. These property notions agree not with my own. Yet, certainly the present property scheme invokes awful evils upon society, rich no less than poor. The question, first, of inherited property, and next, of all private property, is to be handled in this century. Can one man serve another for wages without being degraded? Yes, but not in all relations. I have no moral right to use the service of another, provided it degrades him in my sight, in that of his fellows, or himself."

*Page 335, note 6.* The first great ocean steamer was building at this time, and met with various disasters in the launching.

*Page 337, note 7.* These were among the early and leading ministers of Boston who became known as Unitarians.

*Page 337, note 8.* In a letter written in December, 1857, Parker comments on his contemporaries, and estimates that their fame will be enduring in proportion as they have been devoted to conscience and humanity. "Prescott has changed no man's opinion." "Webster has connected himself with nothing except hunkerism." Then he says: "The triumph of Emerson, who has a more glorious history than any American of this generation! . . . Emerson has touched the deepest strings on the human harp, and, ten centuries after he is immortal, will wake music which he first waked." See Frothingham's "Life," page 441.

## XV

### A BUMBLEBEE'S THOUGHTS

Edward Desor, a Swiss naturalist of Neuchâtel, and a professor in the college there, spent five years in Boston in the early 50's. Parker found in him an intimate friend and confidant, and one from whom he received the most valuable aid in regard to all scientific subjects. On Desor's return to Europe Parker wrote: "It is pleasant to remember that we, at least, have always appreciated him; and nothing has ever occurred, in nearly five years' acquaintance and four years of intimate friendship, to cause the least regret. He has always been on the humane side, always on the just side. His love of truth, and sober industry, his intuitive perception of the relations of things, his quick sight for comprehensive generalizations, have made me respect him a good deal. His character has made me love him very much. There is no man that I should miss so much of all my acquaintance."

Desor's biography was written by Prof. Carl Vogt, under the title, "Edward Desor: Lebensbild eines Naturforschers." It was published as number 24 of "Deutsche Bucherei," by S. Schottlaender, Breslau. The following is a brief outline of this biography. Desor was born February, 1811, near Homburg, the son of an old Huguenot family from the south of France. He studied law at Heidelberg, and then went to Paris, where he translated Carl Ritter's Geography. Then he went to Switzerland, where he taught French to the younger members of the Vogt family. After a year he became the secretary of Agassiz at Neuchâtel. In August, 1839, he was joined by Carl Vogt, who became Agassiz's assistant. Another of this group was A. Gressly. For five years they aided Agassiz in preparing his work on fossil fishes, in ex-

ploring glaciers, and in other geological investigations. After Agassiz came to America, Desor studied glaciers in Norway and Sweden, and then followed him. They soon separated, however, for Desor was strongly anti-slavery, while Agassiz was friendly to conditions in the south. Desor became a member of the commission for the geological survey of the United States. In 1852 he returned to Switzerland at the solicitation of a brother, who soon after died, and left him with an ample fortune. He became a professor in Neuchâtel, entered into politics, but without success, and died February 23, 1882. He published several pamphlets on geological and other scientific subjects. His chief works were "Excursions et séjours dans les glaciers et les hautes régions des Alpes de M. Agassiz et de ses compagnons de voyage," Neuchâtel, 1844. "Synopsis des echinides fossiles," Paris, 1858. "Nouvelles excursions," Neuchâtel, 1879. "La Foret vierge et le Sahara," Paris, 1879.

In Frothingham's "Biography" are published many of Parker's letters to Desor, as well as several from Desor to Mrs. Parker after the death of Parker, all showing the high esteem in which the Boston preacher was held by his scientific friend. In the "Life and Correspondence," John Weiss gives a detailed account of a visit to Desor which Parker made in the summer of 1859. Desor is described as a man of property, who spent his summers in La Sagne valley of the Jura mountains. At Combe-Varin he owned a châlet which had once been a hunting lodge. Here he entertained his friends, and he usually had about him a dozen scientific men. Parker was his guest there, and found new promise of health in the mountains. He wandered about the valley and in the woods, used an axe vigorously, and found delight in the company of the other guests.

One of the results of this summer was a book which

bore this title-page: Album von Combe-Varin. Zur Erinnerung an Theodor Parker und Hans Lorenz Küchler. Mit fünf lithographischen Tafeln. Zurich, Schabelitz'sche Buchhandlung, 1861. It was edited by Mayer von Esslingen. At the end of this volume, occupying pages 309–331, is an "Esquiesse de la vie de Théodore Parker, par E. Desor." Among the contributors to the album were Dr. Jacob Moleschott, of Heidelberg, the famous physiologist; Dr. Ch. Martins; Dr. C. F. Schonbein, of Bâle, the inventor of gun-cotton and the discoverer of ozone; Herr A. Gressly, and Herr Jacob Venedy, a German advocate, and a frequent exile for his liberal political and religious opinions.

In his sketch of Parker, contained in this volume, Desor says of his summer at Combe-Varin:

"It is evident that the presence of a man like Mr. Parker, under such conditions, in the society of persons devoted to the cultivation of intellectual things, was both a stimulant and a benefit. The greatest liberty for everybody being the rule at Combe-Varin, they never met, except at meals. In the intervals, each one followed his inclination, some to look for flowers, for fruits, for lichens, for fossils, while others went into the woods to read. In the evening, after tea, or during the day, if the weather was unfavorable, they met around the table of the châlet, to discuss some question of general interest. Mr. Parker was of all the most animated, and such was his desire for information that he easily obtained from all the guests communications upon the subjects most familiar to each. Sometimes we had well-meditated dissertations, and the articles which compose this volume, will show, I hope, that they were not devoid of interest and scientific value.

"It was natural that one whose mind embraced a wide range of studies, and who was at the same time a

master in the art of expressing his ideas, should furnish his contingent to these recreations. We had, indeed, the good fortune to receive many communications from our deceased friend, mostly upon serious subjects, religious, philosophical, such as may be found in his works, or possibly in inedited fragments. Sometimes, also, subjects less grave were the order of the day. Though the society was composed in good part of professors and men of letters, there was no concealment of the imperfection of methods, nor of the whims and weaknesses of the priests of science. Mr. Parker had, more than any other man, a sure eye and a practised judgment when it came to an estimate of the real value of men and things. Simple in his mental habit, as in his physical traits, he specially detested all far-fetched theories, and doctrines framed for occasion and complaisance, and laughed readily at those theologians and natural philosophers who believe that they are called upon at every turn to become the interpreters of the divine wisdom, power, and goodness. The English, in their Bridgewater Treatises, have made a singular abuse of these untimely appeals to Providence, and have thus compromised the cause which they pretended they were serving. There is no use in trying to bespeak glorifications for God. It is not at all astonishing that the Americans, by habitude or calculation, should have carried this farther than the English, in their treatises for popular use, but it seems at least strange that savants trained in Europe should fall into the same foible.

"Allusion is made to this manner of studying nature in the 'History of an Antediluvian Congress of Bumble-bees,' which Mr. Parker related to us one evening with a chaming humor; he has since kindly prepared it for this Album. It was his last work.

"Thus the six weeks were passed which Mr. Parker was pleased to reckon among the most delightful of

his sojourn in Europe, because, in the midst of the pure air of our mountains, surrounded by persons who had all learned to love and to appreciate him, he thought he had recovered health, especially in living with that intellectual life which was indispensable to him, and for which he had languished during his abode in the Antilles. Besides, he met among the guests of Combe-Varin, persons who were very sympathetic with him, particularly Dr. Küchler. Both of them Protestants, the one in his quality of minister of a religious congregation, the other as the preacher to the German-Catholic Church of Heidelberg, they extended a hand to each other across the forms and rites of their respective confessions."

Not only did Parker come into intimate relations at Combe-Varin with Moleschott, who was greatly dreaded as a materialist, but the volume published as a tribute to him contained a sketch of a tree under which Parker often sat, which was made by Dr. Karl Vogt, professor of natural history at Geissen, and subsequently of geology at Geneva and Berne, also noted as a materialist. This sketch is reproduced at the end of the twenty-fifth chapter of Weiss's "Life and Correspondence." In regard to his relations to such men as these, Frothingham says truly: "He knew the writings of Moleschott, and talked with him personally. The books of Karl Vogt were not strange to him. The philosophy of Ludwig Büchner was as familiar to him as to any of Büchner's disciples. He was intimate with the thoughts of Feuerbach. He drew into discussion every atheist and materialist he met; talked with them closely, confidentially; and rose from the interview more confident in the strength of his own positions than ever. Darwin's first book 'On the Origin of Species,' which was brought to him in Rome, contained nothing that disturbed him. He thought it unsupported in many of its facts, and hasty in its